

# Navy News

MARCH 1998

70p

## TIME FOR DISCOVERY

Don't miss our  
museums guide

starting next month



## Navy watch on the melting ice

page 31



## WIN A CAMCORDER!

Plus £500 in  
cash prizes  
with our  
Joker Jack  
competition

page 14



## Two-stage pay rise

NAVY pay will increase by between 3.75 and 4.2 per cent this year – but will again be introduced in two stages, the first being paid on April 1 and the second on September 1. Junior rates will receive the higher percentage award.

Living expenses are to rise by 3.5 per cent, and food charges by 1.5 per cent.

■ Full report – page 11

# READY FOR

# ACTION



● HMS Invincible launches a Sea Harrier in the Gulf and (inset), the Commander of the UK Task Group, Rear Admiral Ian Forbes.



BRITAIN's Naval force in the Gulf was primed and ready to take action against Saddam Hussein as *Navy News* went to press.

In an exclusive interview with us, the Commander of the UK Task Group, Rear Admiral Ian Forbes, said his ships and aircraft were well prepared for joint bombing tasks with the Americans over Iraq.

Speaking in HMS Invincible, Admiral Forbes – who commanded the aircraft carrier for the bombing of Serb installations in Bosnia in 1995 – said that for weeks his warships and aircraft had been operating in the Gulf alongside the carriers USS Independence and George Washington.

The British force includes the frigate HMS Coventry and the destroyer HMS Nottingham, which have continued to enforce UN sanctions on Iraq, and the supply ship RFA Fort Victoria.

"The task group is in a position to deploy what is asked of them," said Admiral Forbes. "Operations are intensive and focused, with our Harrier GR7s and Sea Harrier FA2s conducting business alongside the Americans on shore and in the carriers."

While recognising that the American force deployed in support of the UN weapons inspection programme was huge in comparison to Britain's, he said that the Royal Navy and RAF contribution offered a significant offensive strength.

"The Nation brings to the table a task group offering offensive and defensive air ability, with Sea Harriers equipped with AMRAAM air-to-

■ Turn to centre pages  
■ RAF at sea – page 19

## Why we're going up

NAVY NEWS is bigger and brighter. Over the past 12 months the average size of your *Navy News* has risen to more than 40 pages packed full of news, features and readers' services which keep you in touch with the Royal Navy present and past.

And since the beginning of the year, your award-winning paper has broken new ground by bringing you full colour throughout.

Production costs have, however, been rising unavoidably, and we have to adjust the price to maintain and build upon the unrivalled quality that you have come to expect from us.

So, from next month, *Navy News* will cost just 10p more – yet still a bargain with more news, more colour, and more supplements featuring special subjects and events.

## First women COs

THE first two women to be chosen by the Royal Navy to command HM ships are due to take up their appointments this month. Lt Sue Moore is to command HMS Dasher, and Lt Melanie Rees will become CO of HMS Express.

■ See page 15



# Newcastle to the rescue as freighter sinks



ONE OF the two seaboats launched by HMS Newcastle to rescue five members of the crew of a sinking freighter in the Caribbean, returns to the destroyer.

The boat's crew – (l-r) AB(R) Greg Gregory, LS(R) Chris Smith and LS(M) Del Toms – were among the ship's company who responded quickly when the fully laden cargo ship got into trouble.

She had been berthed near the Newcastle in the port of Oranjestad, on the island of Aruba off Venezuela. But soon after leaving harbour, the freighter began to

capsize. Newcastle, in the right place at the right time, quickly launched her two seaboats, the other being manned by LS(SEA) John Johnson and OM(AW) Alice Cooper.

The destroyer's first-aid teams were waiting on board to receive the survivors, and took care of them until the island's emergency services arrived.

As West Indies Guardship, Newcastle has been engaged in extensive anti-drug smuggling operations since November. So far she has visited Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Montserrat, Barbados, St Lucia and the Dominican

Republic, and returns to Portsmouth in July.

At Montserrat the ship hosted a beach barbecue for 150 of the island's schoolchildren. About 180 islanders were taken on a circumnavigation of the island, many of whom seeing for the first time the devastation wrought by the volcanic eruptions last year.

At Barbados, LWEM Stephen Firman married his fiancée, Jodie, at the Crystal Grove Hotel. Most of the Weapons Engineering Department attended, and the bride was given away by the ship's Commanding Officer, Cdr Nick Lambert.



● POACMN Phil Warrington – saved four men.

## Argus helicopters save 12 crewmen in mountainous seas

# MISSION IMPOSSIBLE FEAT BY SEA KINGS

ATLANTIC WAVES up to 70ft high and winds gusting to 65 knots set the scene for one of the most hazardous and successful rescues by Royal Navy helicopters in recent years.

"Horrendous" conditions faced by three Sea Kings from the helicopter support ship RFA Argus seemed to present them with a mission impossible in a night-long race against time to save the crew of a sunken Spanish container ship.

During the gruelling operation, which took place entirely in darkness, the three helicopters of 810 Naval Air Squadron's Sea Flight plucked 12 crewmen from the mountainous seas 380 miles west of Gibraltar.

Almost nothing seemed to be in the rescuers' favour. The problems were:

■ For much of the time they were flying at extreme range in driving rain, taking over an hour to reach the spot where the stricken ship, the *Delphin Del Mediterraneo*, went down, and taking two hours to return at speeds of only 55 knots against a headwind.

■ On their way back and forth to the scene, the aircraft had to fly at 1,500ft due to the constant, violent turbulence caused by intense electric storm activity.

■ In the blackness, a Portuguese P3 Orion maritime reconnaissance aircraft directed the Sea Kings on to contacts picked up by its sensors, but the sea was littered with debris, each item of which had to be checked out as it showed up.

■ Until RFA Argus closed the range, the helicopters could only



● RFA Argus and a Sea King of 810 Squadron.

spend 30 minutes over the rescue area, and it took a long time, in the conditions, to winch up each survivor.

■ In one of the first sorties, POACMN Davies was in the winch strop, attempting to rescue a second survivor, when he was injured – swamped by a wave estimated to be twice the height of a house.

■ Wind conditions were so difficult that on recovery to Argus, the helicopters had to land facing aft with reduced visual references.

In something of an understatement, Flight Commander, Lt Cdr Clive Rawson told *Navy News*: "Even by normal search and rescue standards, this was not a run-of-the-mill operation. I've been flying for 18 years, and I've never flown in

worse conditions.

"They were horrendous. The seas were absolutely mountainous, and it was extremely hazardous for that type of rescue."

Argus had been on a training exercise in the area, and at about midday on February 2, Lt Cdr Rawson decided to cancel flying due to the conditions. A few hours later, at 1630, an appeal for help was relayed to the ship via Porto Santo airfield near Madeira.

The ship's Commanding Officer, Capt Les Coupland RFA, headed at best speed – in those conditions, about 15 knots – towards the last known position of the container ship. Just over two hours later, the first two Sea Kings were launched at 160 miles range. They were fol-

lowed by the third aircraft of Sea Flight, for a continuous shuttle operation lasting for over nine hours.

**In that time the three aircraft lifted 12 men to safety, from liferafts or from the water, and found one body.**

The few factors in favour of success was the moderate temperature of the sea at 17C, the excellent survival suits worn by the Spanish ship's crew, and the dogged endurance of the Sea King crews who spent an average of over six hours in the air in the worst that nature could throw at them.

By dawn the fliers were exhausted and their aircraft, which had

suffered in the severe conditions, needed servicing. With only one man still missing, Lt Cdr Rawson reluctantly had to call off Sea Flight's search.

But soon after, the ships of NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic were in helicopter range, and the hunt for the missing man was taken up by a Canadian Sea King, a US Sea Hawk and a Dutch Lynx helicopter – all using Argus as a platform. They were joined at 0900 by the rested Sea Flight.

**Although the weather had abated, there seemed little hope of finding the last man – until, almost 18 hours after his ship was sunk, the Lynx found him in the water, near the end of his endurance but alive.**

He soon recovered in Argus, and with the other 12 survivors, was flown ashore to Vigo where they and their rescuers were greeted enthusiastically by waiting relatives – and a battery of TV and press cameras.

"It was a very joyful scene, with lots of thanks and lots of hugging," said Lt Cdr Rawson.

While Argus was still at sea, PO Davies was flown ashore to hospital in Lisbon, before being transferred home to Treleise Hospital, Truro, to complete his recovery.

Acknowledging the remarkable rescue, C-in-C Fleet, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce signalled Argus to say "The actions of you all were in the very best seafaring traditions."

And in another signal, NATO Commander, Vice Admiral Reis Rodrigues of Portugal, said: "Such behaviour is illustrative of your outstanding professionalism, commitment to duty and courage... it honours all those who serve at sea."

## Bravery medal for SAR diver

A CREWMAN on a Search and Rescue helicopter who showed "tremendous bravery" in helping to save the lives of four Belgian trawlermen has been awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal – and the entire crew of the aircraft have won the Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award.

POACMN Philip Warrington was the diver of Rescue 193, a Sea King of 771 Naval Air Squadron based at RN air station Culdrose.

On February 6, 1996 the crew was scrambled to assist the trawler *L'Ebauche* which had an engine-room fire in violent seas 38 miles north of St Ives. The other SAR crew members were Lt Bryan Nicholas (pilot), John Collicutt and Guy Norris, and LACMN Robert McKee.

When the Sea King arrived on the scene, the four crew of the vessel had taken to a liferaft. In atrocious conditions – driving rain, winds gusting to over 50 knots, and mountainous seas – PO Warrington was lowered on the winch.

### Huge breakers

He lifted two fishermen, one at a time to the aircraft. Then, with the liferaft in danger of capsizing, he decided to lift the remaining two simultaneously.

But he saw that the steady lines of the raft were an entangling hazard, so disregarding thoughts for his own safety he disconnected himself from the winch and swam to the raft.

**After the remaining survivors were reconnected, the raft fell into a deep trough, the wire snagged on the helicopter doorway step, and jammed, dragging the three men through huge breakers.**

Lt Norris and LA McKee had to pull the wire in inch by inch by hand to recover the three. Throughout, PO Warrington remained calm, constantly reassuring the shocked and frightened survivors.

Commodore Simon Thornewill, Commanding Officer of RNAS Culdrose, said: "The full extent of PO Warrington's tremendous bravery and skill during this particularly dangerous night rescue is very apparent."

The Prince Philip Award was presented to the crew by Prince Michael of Kent at a ceremony in the Guildhall, London.

PO Warrington and LA McKee received another accolade when the Mariners Society presented the Edward and Maisie Lewis Award to them and other members of the crew of a 771 Squadron Sea King for an outstanding air-sea rescue.

The rescue, of a master of a container vessel, took place on March 26 last year. Pilots were Lts Patrick Webster, John Duffy, and the observer was Lt Peter Stretton.



## THE AIRCREW

AIRCREW of 810 Squadron who took part in the rescue in order of take-off:

**SK1** – Pilot, Lt John Brotherton; co-pilot, Lt Mike Bullen; observer, Lt Gary Milton (replaced by Lt Kev Dodd for second sortie); winchman, POACMN Phil Davies (replaced by POACMN Steve Elsby and LACMN Taff Monk for second sortie).

**SK2** – Pilot, Lt Craig Finch; co-pilot, Lt Martin Brooman; observer, Lt Cdr Clive Rawson (Flight CO); winchman, LACMN Aggie Weston (reinforced by Lt Tim Oatley for second sortie).

**SK3** – Pilot, Lt Cdr Neil Hunter; co-pilot, Lt Max Harries; observer, Lt Martin Roberts; winch, POACMN Steve Ivill & POACMN John Banks.





## Purple passage

COLOURS from Monet's famous paintings of the Thames are evoked in this atmospheric view of HMS Cumberland arriving on a visit to London after her major refit and re-dedication. The picture of the Type 22 frigate was taken by John Draper, Chairman of the HMS Cumberland Association.

Inset: Cumberland alongside HMS Belfast, by PO(Phot) Jon Garthwaite.

## New hope in fight to save HMS Cavalier

HOPES that Britain's last surviving World War II destroyer, HMS Cavalier, might be saved for the nation have leapt among campaigners following a hearing before the Culture, Media and Sport Committee of the House of Commons.

Secretary of the HMS Cavalier Association, Sid Anning, told *Navy News* that almost every member of the committee, chaired by Gerald Kaufman, seemed sympathetic to their cause.

"We came out of that meeting cock-a-hoop," he said. "We now have a lot of hope that we can save the Cavalier."

Among the groups questioned by the committee was Cavalier's present owners, South Tyneside Council, whose proposed deal to sell the ship to a Malaysian firm fell through earlier this year.

A representative of the National Heritage Lottery told the committee that they would consider any new application for a grant on behalf of the ship. And English Partnership, the operators of Chatham Maritime – the 350-acre regeneration project on the site of the former RN dockyard – have offered to consider a permanent, dry-dock berth there for the ship should enough money be found from other sources to refurbish her and set her up.

Mr Anning said the Cavalier Association would now want to add to its £15,000 fighting fund to pay experts to draw up a business plan which could form the basis of a new application to the Lottery fund.

## FIRST SEA LORD WARNS OF 'CHANGE FATIGUE'

# RN 'bedeviled by manpower shortages'

"MANPOWER shortages in certain categories still bedevil us, affecting both those ashore and afloat," writes First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jock Slater in the foreword to the RN's yearbook *Broadsheet*.

Shore establishments were bearing the brunt of the resultant unfilled billets.

"For most branches, the time spent ashore between sea appointments and drafts has reached its minimum and I am very conscious how disturbing this is for our families.

"However, after a period of enforced low recruiting, the taps are fully open again and the signs are generally encouraging. Nevertheless, it will be some time before the manpower scene is back in balance post the turbulence of the last few years."

Admiral Slater added: "My Navy Board colleagues and I are acutely aware of the cumulative effect of the many changes and improvements that we have underway; some call it "change fatigue". Add to this the uncertainties engendered by a Defence Review and the result is a potentially most unsettling brew.

"That the Naval Service continues to enjoy a reputation second to none on the world stage is a great

tribute to the calibre of our people who, despite this period of change, continue to show dedication and professionalism of the highest order."

Elsewhere, *Broadsheet* comments: "Today, as most parents and teachers have had no military experience their appreciation of the Services could well be based on shallow tabloid articles by authors whose little direct knowledge is compounded by their poor understanding of military ethos. Accordingly, unless those of influence are continually informed of the role of the Services and their significant range of training, sport and other opportunities, they may, with the very best of intentions, discourage a Service career."

*Broadsheet* Editor Cdr Lee Hulme adds: "From the relative safety of the shore even dedicated landlubbers can feel part of their rich maritime heritage simply by getting close, staring out to sea and following those ribbed swells as they roll sedately ashore to explode on the beach in a seethe of powdery white..."

"As you turn these pages, and the next time you fly over great tracts of Ocean, remember to cherish the heritage of this proud maritime nation and try to hear the sound of the great waters. The noise they make is a good noise. It's the sea. The Royal Navy is on that sea Defending Britain's Interests Worldwide."

## Cardiff collects

WITHIN months of emerging from refit last year, HMS Cardiff was already collecting for her new trophy cabinet.

The Kelvin Hughes Vetac Trophy was actually awarded to the Type 42 destroyer's Anti Submarine Warfare team in 1996, but because she ceased operations shortly afterwards the presentation was delayed.

● Capt Hugh Edleston, CO of HMS Cardiff and Captain Fifth Destroyer Squadron receives the trophy from Kelvin Hughes' Michael Broughton – recognising the ship's best ASW attack records.



Après le huge succès de notre Newsview en Français last month, nous présentons les further aventures de Jack et Jacques, dans:

## Le Deuxième Hunt Pour Rouge Octobre

(Somewhere sous l'Atlantique)

'Allo, Jack? Ici le FS Emerald.'

'HMS Trenchant ici' (Les fake sons de sonar pinging du sort que les movie watchers préfèrent). 'Receiving vous loud et clair, Jacques – vous avez un problème?'

'Non, Jack. Nous avons un problème. Un mega problème.'

'Qu'est-ce que c'est then?'

'Un grand Russki sous-marin est heading pour l' eastern seaboard des Etats-Unis.'

'Sacre flaming bleu! Où est mon panique bouton? Mais... hold on une minute. Nous sommes tous amis maintenant, après le fin de la Guerre Froide. Pourquoi êtes vous dans un tizzy about ça?'

'Parce que il y a un nutter dans le driving seat, Jack. Et il a un terrible grievance personnel contre tout l'Ouest.'

'Peut-être not, Jacques. Le last temps this happened Sean Connery turned out not to be un nutter. Il était James Bond, après tout, seulement avec un rug gris coupé en brosse et le même unmistakable accent Ecossais.'

'J'admire Sean Connery aussi, Jack. Mais cet homme n'est pas Monsieur Kiss Kiss Bang Bang 007. Cet homme est vraiment fou. Complètement out to déjeuner. Il est un torpedo short d'un full set de tubes.'

'Merde! Combien de torpedoes – et de missiles ballistiques – a t'il?'

'Enough to blast nous tous à kingdom come, Jack, je ne suis pas kidding vous.'

'Mmm... Mais qu'est-ce que c'est, ce "terrible grievance" qu'il a?'

'Ah, maintenant nous sommes coming au pointe! C'est tout votre faute, Jack!'

'Moi? Pourquoi moi? C'est toujours moi! Mais pas this temps, surely? Oh – très bon! C'est un wind up, je knew it. Vous êtes pulling mon plonger, eh?'

'Pas du tout, Jack. Vous remarquerez quand vous étiez à Severomorsk last printemps? Quand vous avez vendu une paire de "Genuine Levis" à Capitaine Yuri Yeltsin, le favorite nephew de Boris, à un knock-down prix? Ils sont les jeans de C&A en réalité, n'est-ce pas? Need je say more?'

'Oh mon Dieu! Je vois ma entière carrière going down la toilette!'

'Avec le rest du civilisation d'Ouest comme nous know it, Jack. Bonne nuit. Je vais à l'Australie, comme Gregory Peck dans 'On The Beach', le film de l'apocalyptique novel par Nevil Chut. N'oubliez pas to turn off les lights.'

(Le klaxon sonne dans HMS Trenchant, mais comme avec l'alarme de feu dans Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, où nous à Navy News avons nos offices – et which est testé chaque Mercredi matin pour un solid 45 minutes et which est driving nous tous nuts – personne ne prenne pas de notice)



# Drafty... The Women's Sea Service Co-ordinator

## DCI should help with your family planning!

**THE WOMEN'S** Sea Service Co-ordinator, Lt Cdr David Pugsley, is responsible to the Commodore Naval Drafting for the co-ordination of female manning issues in ships.

This involves him acting as the central point of contact for all drafting sections so that the best use is made of the bunks available for female ratings.

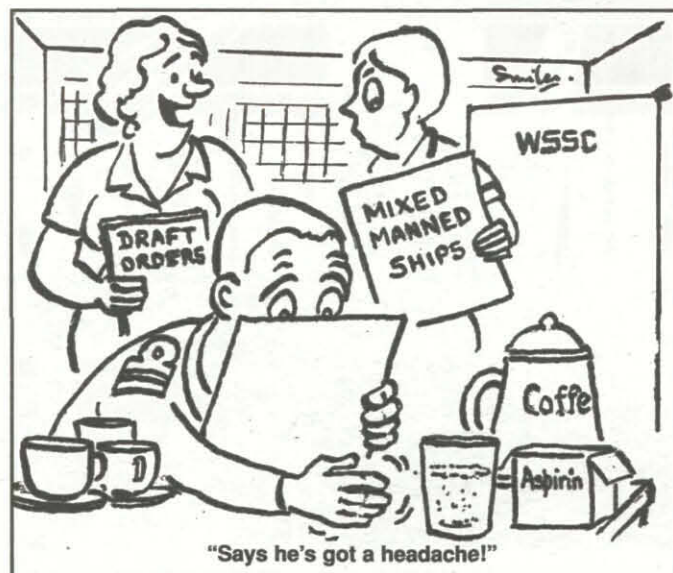
He is also responsible for advising CND on whether ships need to be mixed-manned. In addition, he keeps a watching brief on matters relating to pregnancy. E-Sec, LWTR Rhonda Phillips, is responsible for receiving statements of intent and other pregnancy related forms and noting the details on the drafting computer so that all sections are aware that ratings are pregnant.

### Balance

There are 699 bunks available to females at sea in 28 different units. In general, each unit has 10 to 15 per cent female manning, although this may change in the future as more female ratings join the Navy.

At the moment, sea-going female ratings make up just under 5.8 per cent of the rating population and have about 5.5 per cent of the sea-going billets, so the picture is roughly in balance.

But this figure does disguise the fact that in certain branches there



are almost as many females as males and therefore, in those branches, there is a large disparity between the number of billets available for each sex.

The drafting desks are working on this problem by trying to replace males with females when a draft is due but for branches like the writers, where sea billets are limited, it will take some time to correct the problem.

In the ideal world this would be a simple process but because ships cannot provide extra accommodation in ones and twos it is quite difficult to achieve. Please bear with

us while we try to resolve this difficult problem.

### Maternity

We now have an up-to-date DCI with the details of the maternity rules, regulations and entitlements.

This is DCI JS 124/97. Any Servicewoman contemplating starting a family should read this DCI as it will explain the complex rules, although some of them will need more than one read, so it is worth outlining some of them here!

Providing you are not leaving for another reason, you have a right to remain in the Service until you have your child. Only you can decide whether you leave or not; Servicewomen who become pregnant are not required to leave.

The Navy has a responsibility not to endanger the health and safety of a pregnant woman and her baby, but in order to carry out this responsibility, you must ensure that your commanding officer is aware that you are pregnant at the earliest opportunity by informing him through your line manager. Once you know you are pregnant you should not go on board a ship.

You are entitled to continue working right up until the week that your baby is due. When you are unable, for health and safety reasons, to work in your normal environment, alternative employment will be found.

When your pregnancy has been confirmed you will have to decide whether to leave the Service or have your baby and return to work.

HMS Nelson, Drake and Neptune are the designated units for maternity leave arrangements and they have at least one individual who has an in-depth knowledge of the maternity leave rules. You should seek advice from your nearest centre as soon as possible.

The DCI gives an additional option for maternity leave. You will see that the old titles of 'paid' or 'unpaid' maternity leave have been changed. Paid maternity leave is now called statutory maternity leave (SML) and unpaid leave



is occupational maternity absence (OMA).

Previously, if you opted to return to work, you were asked to confirm this intention and could remain on maternity leave for up to 37 weeks after the birth. Now you may choose at the beginning to take only 14 weeks SML.

This has the advantage of making known which date you intend to return but you should be aware that if you take this option you may not (except in the case of your medical unfitness) extend this period beyond the 14 weeks.

### Caution

A note of caution; you should all be aware that in choosing to return to work you are agreeing that you are able to meet all the normal requirements of Service life including duties, watches/shifts, being drafted non-preference (when necessary) and being drafted to sea if you are liable for and due sea service.

Please also bear in mind that both you and your partner could be

drafted away from the area at the same time.

You may also find that you are at the top, or near the top of the sea roster. When you have indicated that you intend to return to work, your commanding officer will be advised when you can expect to return to sea.

You will, however, receive your entitlement to drafting notice, but in planning your return to work you should ensure that all the necessary child care arrangements are in place before you are due to join your ship. You should also remember that in the build-up period to sea time you may have to undergo some PJTs.

Drafty will do all that is possible to place you where you want on your return to work, but if this is not possible, you can expect to receive a minimum of three months notice of any future drafting if it means moving you out of your preference area.

Finally, don't forget to read the DCI and talk to your nearest maternity leave centre as soon as possible.

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## Challenge for Sir Tristram

RFA SIR Tristram proved that no challenge is too big when she sailed to Antwerp with eight new 62-ton tanks on board.

The Challenger II tanks, destined for the Scots Dragoon Guards in Germany, are the first to be delivered to the British Army.

They were brought from the headquarters of the Royal Armoured Corps in Bovington by the CR2 Fielding Team and will be sent on from Antwerp to the Dragoons in Fallinbustel.

Freighting vehicles and equipment for the Army and the Royal Marines is a routine task for Sir Tristram and the four other landing ships (logistic) in the RFA.

When not participating in amphibious operations and exercises, the ships have regular runs from Marchwood to Antwerp, Zeebrugge and Split.

Below: Turret reversed, the new 62-ton Challenger tank embarks in Sir Tristram at Marchwood.

Right: Safe inside, tanks are secured in the ship's tank deck before the voyage to Antwerp.



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# Scott scans wider vista

**T**HE ROYAL Navy's latest survey vessel is not just big in size – she also thinks big when it comes to performance.

Ocean survey vessel HMS Scott, at 13,500 tonnes, dwarfs her predecessor HMS Hecla, which at 4,000 tonnes was less than a third of the size – but carried almost twice as many people.

Scott's size was determined by the multi-beam sounding system she was designed to deploy, which

is housed in two large arrays along and across her hull. The Sonar Array Sounding System – SASS IV – is capable of collecting depth information over a strip of seabed several kilometres wide.

This means the ship can accurately survey 150 square kilometres of ocean floor every hour, a task which would have taken her predecessors months to achieve.

In order to provide a stable platform for surveying, Scott's hull is deep-ballasted with 8,000 tonnes of water – so at deep ballast, the ship draws more water than an Invincible-class aircraft carrier.

Information is displayed in real time as a three-dimensional image of the sea bed, allowing surveyors on watch to monitor the quality of data being gathered.

It is then processed and checked before being submitted to the Hydrographic Office in Taunton.

The ship's surveyors are also responsible for collecting and processing navigational, gravity, magnetic and swath bathymetric data, which is gathered by means of three gravimeters, a towed proton magnetometer and an Aquashuttle shallow oceanographic profiler.

The ship's main propulsion is provided by two Krupp nine-cylinder diesels, and the ship's machinery is protected by a comprehensive surveillance system which allows Scott to operate with unattended machinery spaces – a concept that is new to the Fleet.

The draft and trim of the ship, which is vital in the successful

operation of the surveying sensors, is controlled by pumping water ballast through 23 connected tanks.

A powerful retractable bow-thruster is brought into play when slow-speed manoeuvring or precise station-keeping is required.

Scott has been built to merchant standards, providing a high standard of living.

Almost everyone has their own cabin, with a maximum of two people to one bathroom.

Senior and junior rates have their own separate communal areas, and there are two activities

rooms fitted out with sports equipment for recreation.

The ship has been designed by BAeSEMA to spend at least 307 days a year at sea, and to match this requirement the ship's company operates on a rotation basis, with around two-thirds on board at any one time.

Scott was handed over to the Navy less than 30 months after the initial order was placed, and following her commissioning last September her Commanding Officer, Capt Bob Mark, took her across the Atlantic for her first major voyage.

A fortuitous spell of bad weather allowed Scott to prove the quality of her equipment, gathering good data in conditions which would have defeated HMS Hecla.

The ship spent some time at Port Canaveral in Florida, fine-tuning the system, conducting equipment trials and training for the ship's company.

There was also a chance for the ship's company to host a number of VIPs, both British and American, to watch HMS Vigilant on Trident missile firing trials, and to see three rockets and a shuttle launched from Cape Canaveral.

Members of the ship's company managed to fit in a week-long expedition to the Smoky Mountains, and a group assisted in the building of a house for a sheltered housing project.

Scott was scheduled to sail last month on her first surveying period, returning home to Devonport in the summer.



● On a grand scale – HMS Scott sails into Devonport.

## Ship name is tribute to Polar explorer

THREE – or four – ships have now honoured the name of Antarctic explorer Capt Robert Falcon Scott, who died in 1912 on his way back from the South Pole.

The first HMS Scott was a First World War destroyer, of the Admiralty Large Design.

Built by Cammell-Laird with a displacement of 1,801 tons, the ship's main armament was five 4.7in guns, with six 21in torpedo tubes.

She was completed in 1917, but her career with the Royal Navy was short-lived, as she was torpedoed on August 15 1918, probably by the submarine UC-17, in the North Sea off the Danish coast.

The second Scott, along with sister ship HMS Shackleton, began life in the Admiralty Estimates as a fleet minesweeper in 1937, but by the time she was completed in July 1939 she was officially a survey ship.

Displacing 1,260 tons fully-loaded, with a complement of 84, the ship was built by the Caledon Shipbuilding and Engineering Co Ltd, Dundee.

In contrast to her predecessor, the second Scott enjoyed a long life, finally being broken up in 1965.

A fourth Scott, a trawler, was requisitioned by the Admiralty in 1914-15.

### BATTLE HONOURS

ZEEBRUGGE .....1918  
NORWAY .....1941  
NORMANDY .....1944

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### Facts and figures

**Class:** Scott-class Ocean Survey Vessel (OSV)  
**Pennant number:** A131  
**Builder:** BAeSEMA, contracted to Appledore Shipbuilders, Bideford  
**Launched:** October 13, 1996  
**Commissioned:** June 20, 1997  
**Displacement:** 13,500 tonnes  
**Length:** 131.1 metres  
**Beam:** 21.5 metres  
**Draught:** 8.3 metres

**Ship's company:** 63 (12 officers) with room for an extra five; 43 embarked at one time on rota basis  
**Machinery:** Two Krupp MaK 9M32 9-cylinder diesels, one shaft, retractable bow thruster  
**Speed:** 17.5 knots  
**Sensors:** Includes Kelvin Hughes ARPA navigation radar, and SASS IV – the integrated Sonar Array Sounding System – and data processing equipment



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# JACK

BY TUGS



## Gauntlet of fire & ice

REGARDING 'Exercise pact with Russia' (January issue) the general impression was that by omitting any reference to the contribution made by the Arctic convoy veterans during World War II there was a complete lack of respect and a slur on the memories of those of our shipmates, some 3,000, who gave their lives to ensure supplies to Russia.

During the last decade the foundations of 'glasnost' have been created and nurtured by the nearly 3,500 veterans as members of the Russian Convoy Club and the North Russia Club.

In October 1991 you carried an article headlined 'Green light for Reds visit'; this action of sending HMS London was mainly due to pressure by the above clubs on the MOD, saying we veterans would go to Russia for the Dervish '91 celebrations whether the Navy was represented or not.

Issue is taken with the comment: "the Battle of the Atlantic, the most terrible of all sea battles".

"In all fairness, justice will not be done until the British Government recognises the World War II Arctic campaign as Russia has done. It seems a disgrace that the Queen has to try and save the Government's lack of action by giving special permission to wear the Russian medal alongside official medals. - R. Ball, President, The Russian Convoy Club, Yorkshire West Riding Branch.

Mr Ball enclosed a letter from E. Korchagin, curator of the Central Naval Museum in St Petersburg, thanking him for his gift of World War II memorabilia: "They are really wonderful mementos of the unforgettable, heroic years, when our two navies fought side by side against a common enemy... a time when sailors did their duty under such extraordinarily difficult conditions.

"You are one of the British seamen of the allied convoys who ran the gauntlet of fire and ice to bring help to our country, our Motherland at war.

"The warmest feelings of gratitude and our indebtedness remain in the hearts of the Russian people towards the British seamen who took part in those events."

# Sheepish at loss of really useful rig

DCI(RN) 36/97 announced a change with regard to Rig, namely that of introducing the White Tropical Shirt as an all-year-round rig (to be re-named as Shirt, White, Short-Sleeved!), it being able to be worn with the venerable 'woolly pully' giving us 3B and 3C, under the name of General Duty Rig.

At last! Common sense had prevailed, providing a comfortable all-year rig caveated by a very sensible statement that when the occasion demanded a more formal rig than 2N or 2J would be worn.

Conversation with many of those both here in Rosyth and a fair number in Portsmouth found an almost universal approval of the change.

Could it possibly be, then, that after 30-something years in this Navy I would witness something extremely practical being introduced? (Those of you old enough will remember the idiocy at Collingwood which, despite the rain coming down in stair rods, you were not allowed to wear your Burberry unless the Burberry Flag was flying!)

Why should I be surprised, after all this time in, to see a signal from the Second Sea Lord reversing the introduction of General Duty Rig? Further, why should I view with extreme scepticism the statement in the signal, quote:

"Ref A (the DCI) caused some confusion over General Duty Rig. The following rules for RN and QARNNS personnel are issued in clarification..."

Is it not obvious that "in clarifi-

cation" actually means that someone senior somewhere doesn't like the look of the rig and has tried furiously to backpedal without sticking their hand up and saying "whoops, we've cocked up". - WO D.J. Jones, Ships Support Agency, Rosyth Royal Dockyard.

PLEASE can someone tell me why Pusser has made the only useful piece of submarine clothing, the white woolly pully, obsolete?

Is it because all the sheep have put their notice in. Or because they think submariners earn that much money that, if they are cold, they can afford to buy their own?

Or because some wally sat behind his desk in his centrally heated office in London wanted to save a few quid?

We say farewell to 50 years of running rig in the Submarine Service. Cheers - A very wet & cold Scratcher, HMS Spartan.

## Britannia supplement

THE Britannia supplement in the January edition states that in 1970 the yacht was the last HM ship to use hammocks.

I slept in a hammock in HMS Jaguar in 1973-74 and I believe at that time about 30 of us on board did so too. - J. M. Browning, Tadley, Hants.

THE CAPTION that accompanies HMY in the shadow of Table Mountain is incorrect, in that it states that this was the first visit ever of the yacht to Cape Town.

In fact she was moored alongside in 1971/72. At that time I was serving on the Staff of the Senior British Naval Officer, South Africa. - M. B. Duke, Exeter.

# When the Admiral lost his rag

I HAVE been a regular reader of *Navy News* for the past 40 years and still find it fascinating reading after all this time.

I thought you might like to hear this story from my time in HMS Morecambe Bay that happened just a few months before your first edition appeared.

We were in Hong Kong in 1953 towards the end of the Korean War, swinging round No. 4 buoy, having been at sea for six months without going ashore, when who should steam into harbour but the great big American cruiser USS Los Angeles complete with Admiral and two-star Admiral's flag.

A young bright spark said: "I bet anyone a week's bubbly they couldn't get the Admiral's flag and bring it back."

Two of the 'sandscratches' said they would obtain the flag that very evening. The said bright young spark collapsed in a writhing heap at the thought of losing his bubbly for a week and moaned: "I didn't mean it lads, I was only joking."

Too late. The two lads duly went ashore that afternoon bent on meeting up with some of the sailors from the cruiser, which they soon did. After a drink or two in the Kung-Fu they asked them if they would kindly show them over their warship and the American sailors said they would be delighted to show the Limeys a 'real' ship.

They were taken back aboard the Los Angeles and given a guided tour - including the flag deck. Bingo! While one of the lads was asking questions about all sorts of things the other one quickly whipped down the Admiral's flag and stuffed it up his jumper...

Once back on board the Morecambe Bay, the pair reported to the CO, Cdr J. H. Hamer, who was highly delighted at their achievement. After photographs had been taken, he flashed a signal across - something like: "From Morecambe Bay to Los Angeles. Would you like to come and collect your Admiral's flag?"

I do not remember the reply but

**LETTERS to the Editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.**

we understood that the Admiral lost his rag, immediately sent an officer over by boat to collect same - and then complained bitterly to C-in-C Far East, after which our CO was summoned to his office for a reprimand.

Cdr Hamer did not pass this on to the two sandscratches, which just proved what a good skipper he was. - P. D. G. Turk, Farnborough.

## Shaken not stirred

IT IS sad to see that the Royal Navy has no present-day hero who might act as a role model to promote recruiting, and instead must call upon a fictional character widely seen as an egotistical poseur.

The link between an officer of Naval Intelligence and a sea officer is tenuous in the extreme. Naval Intelligence officers were classed as civilian officers and wore a green distinction cloth with their stripes (Appendix to the Navy List 1964).

One supposes that this enterprise is part of the Disneyesque brave new world, and that we may therefore expect, along with James Bond, to see Biggles and Flashman resurrected to aid RAF and Army recruiting. - F. M. J. Wootton, Ventnor, IOW.

■ More letters - page 10.

## Radiant's change of colour

REGARDING the dilemma posed by HMS Cavalier, perhaps a more deserving case for restoration, etc, was the old 1916 R-Class destroyer HMS Radiant.

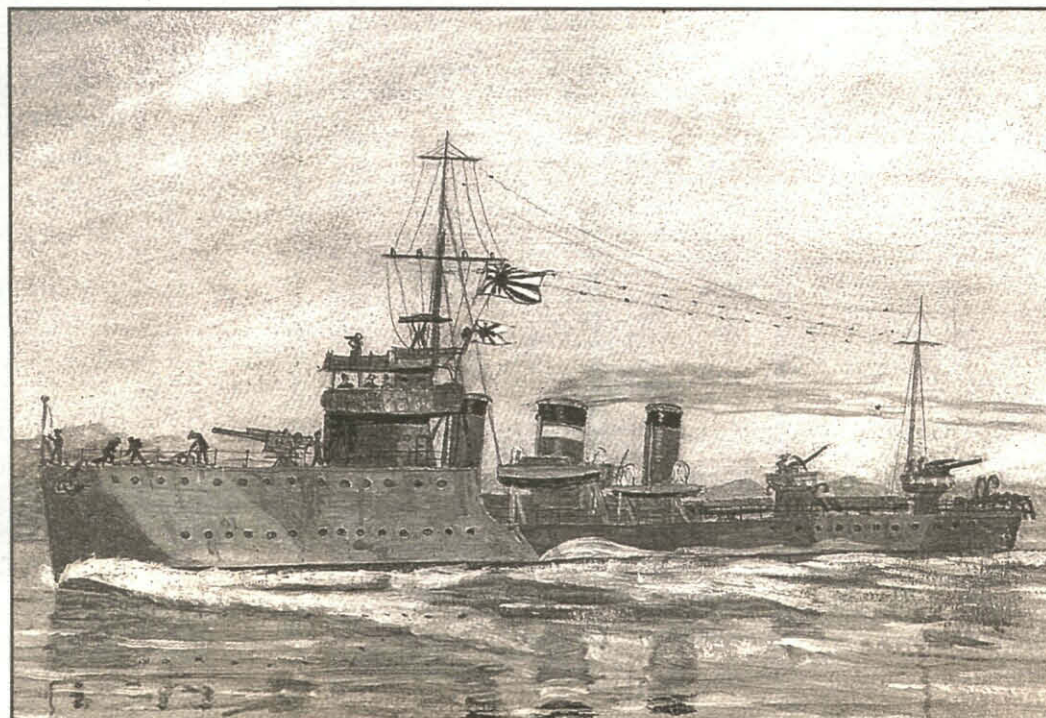
A member of the World Ship Society located this old ship with an extraordinary past still used as a training ship in the Thai Navy.

In the autumn of 1917 she was the first destroyer used to tow the Navy's first DIY 'flat top', the converted Harwich barge H3. The trial run almost cost one of the RNAS's favourite sons, Cdr C. R. Samson, his life.

In the same war, she miraculously survived sailing straight through a minefield.

Sold to Siam in the 1920s, she was commandeered by the Imperial Japanese Navy during World War II. Under the name 'Phra Ruang' she embarrassed us by sinking a US submarine. A contemporary water-colour (left) by a Japanese artist shows her in the guise of sub-chaser.

It is a pity that this old destroyer with such a history could not be saved. - E. M. Shipsey, Marine Art Society, Peacehaven.



## Navy News

No.524 44th year

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# All the nice leopards love a sailor – but 'Rifles' really got catty with the ladies

## Letters

I RECENTLY received a letter from Mr F.W. Adams, an ex-RN war veteran in Kadoma, Zimbabwe, with which he enclosed a copy of the article on the zoo at HMS Excellent from the July 1997 *Navy News*, with its stories of polar bears, lions and other animals and birds on board HM ships at various times.

Mr Adams had read my late father's story about 'Rifles', the leopard in HMS Hyacinth in 1917-19, which had appeared in the 1997 Yearbook of the Society of Friends of the Royal Naval Museum.

My father, who had survived the Battle of Jutland, was then serving as Surgeon-Lieutenant aboard the Hyacinth, which was the flagship of the Cape Squadron, and had taken part in the actions against the German raider *Konigsberg* in the Rufiji Delta two years before.

Unlike cheetahs which have grown up with humans, leopards are reputed to become untrustworthy even when they are full grown, but Rifles grew from a small cub to full adulthood without ever harm-

'We always knew. A deep growl in her chest meant sweet content and love for everybody, but a snarling hiss meant mischief and time to be careful.

'Like all young women she was temperamental and had moods. Sometimes she would not go to bed in the second dog watch as she was supposed to do, but would flatly refuse to turn in. When she was half-grown I could carry her up the ladder to her boudoir and she rather liked being carried, but she was getting heavy and as time went on this became a bit too much for me.

'Insoluble problems are unknown in the Navy, and one method of persuasion never failed. Her ladyship was jealous, and the



● Above: 'Rifles' as a cub with her officers on board HMS Hyacinth at Cape Town in 1917 and (left) as a full-grown leopard at the end of a long leash.



ing anyone.

My father, John Bee, who died in 1962, left this account of her:

'At Mombasa we were given a little leopard cub which had been brought all the way from Kismayu in Jubaland. She lived with us and grew to full leopardhood and we called her 'Rifles'. The gunnery officer was her particular guide and counsellor and I was her lecturer in feline deportment and domestic economy, honorary dietician to seafaring leopards. Her uniform was a neat studded collar, and the rope of her captivity was so long that she had the full run of the cruiser's quarterdeck.

'Her 'house' was at the fore-and-aft bridge, the after end of the superstructure overlooking the quarterdeck, but she seldom used it at sea. The signalmen slung their hammocks there, low down between stanchions in reasonable weather, and she slept in the one left vacant by the signalman on the watch.

'When he came down at eight bells he would lift her into the hammock of his relief of the middle watch, and she gave no trouble.

'As she grew up we watched for signs of viciousness but none came. We had been warned not to feed her raw meat, but she became so sick on half-cooked food that we disregarded the warning. She liked to play with anyone who would, and whenever the desirability of slipping her collar crossed her mind she would slip it, lying quiet and innocent as the mutton whose bones she had been given for dinner, and would then suddenly pounce and seize a passing sailor playfully by an ankle, demanding immediate fun and games. If he played, she growled happily. If he did not she hissed and spat, sulky as any neglected beauty.

sight of females of the human species filled her with wrath.

'She watched them with a yellow eye whenever they came on board. She suspected these dainty visitors of being rivals for our attention and they were often, in fact, sweethearts and wives.

'One of the lady visitors would mount the ladder while strong hands held the leopard by a shortened rope as she strained for appetising legs twinkling up the steps. The rest was easy. We followed on and at the top Rifles would be pushed into her house and the door closed securely and with speed.

'Her anger at the deception was regal in its magnificence. But it was her love of fun that was almost her undoing!

'She liked to hide behind the after capstan and jump out upon passers-by, when she would bite amicably at their ankles. When we were steaming up the West Coast at ten knots she did this once too often, for she had slipped her collar and the object of her playfulness, a newly joined ship's boy, was taken by surprise. He sprang aside with a shriek of terror and she went over the rail into the South Atlantic.

'The Officer of the Watch stopped the ship and called away both sea boats on the instant. The leopard swam after us as if to the manner born, and when she took stock of the situation she altered course and swam for the boats. They brought her on board very ruffled and bedraggled. I have never heard so blasphemous an animal. She damned everybody from the Admiral downwards.

'When we paid off at Portsmouth in 1919 the noise and

bustle of the yard were too much for her. She still loved us but she could not stand civilians. She loathed the noise, detested dockyard hands coming disrespectfully up the gangway with bags of tools without saluting Ensign or leopard, and would spring out from behind a bollard hissing with rage.

'There would be an astounded yell of 'Blimey, it's a tiger!' and a glimpse of the 'mateys' running for the horizon with lightning speed. Eventually there was little work done, but a row of spectators three deep on the jetty.

'She couldn't stay with us any longer. She had to go, forthwith, at once, top priority, quicker than that.

'The Commander in Chief said so, for she disliked anyone with more gold braid about him than Hyacinth had, and announced the fact with bitter criticism, not in wardroom privacy but in full publicity at the gangway when he came aboard, boatswains mates swallowing whistles, the Captain, the Commander, the Major of Marines, the Officer of the Day, the Master-at-Arms, the ship's corporals, the quartermaster and the sideboys aghast, and calling her to behave and be a good girl.

'The Commander took her to London Zoo. He told us that she had settled in with no trouble at all, demoting the Leading Lion to Ordinary Cat. We had reports of her from time to time for two years, a credit to the Zoological Service, they said.

'She lived peacefully in retirement in the London Zoo, and I daresay was long remembered in the hearts of five hundred officers and men. I hope she has good hunting in the land of dreams.'

— J.D.A.Bee, Wartburg, KwaZulu-Natal, SA.

## The big idea:

**Dave**  
Claire can't believe it! She's finally living in a house we can decorate! We bought it from Annington Homes, the company which is selling former MOD properties. And with my service and base discounts the price was unbelievable!

I've been given a bit of grief about my technique with a paint roller (apparently I'm slow). Still, the house is looking brilliant, and we're not arguing too much.

Anyway, you and Sue must drop by soon and check out my handiwork (map enclosed). I might even be allowed to slip out for a couple of swift pints!

Regards,  
Steve



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# People in the News



● WMEM(M) Blakemore.

## Engineering an RN first

A PIECE of Naval history was made when WMEM(M) Tracey Blakemore became the first Leading Wren MEM(M) in the RN.

Tracey, from Doncaster, joined the Navy more than six years ago as one of the first WMEM(M)s, and took her place in the record books while serving in the generation section of HMS Invincible's marine engineering department.



● Lt Fraser Cropper.

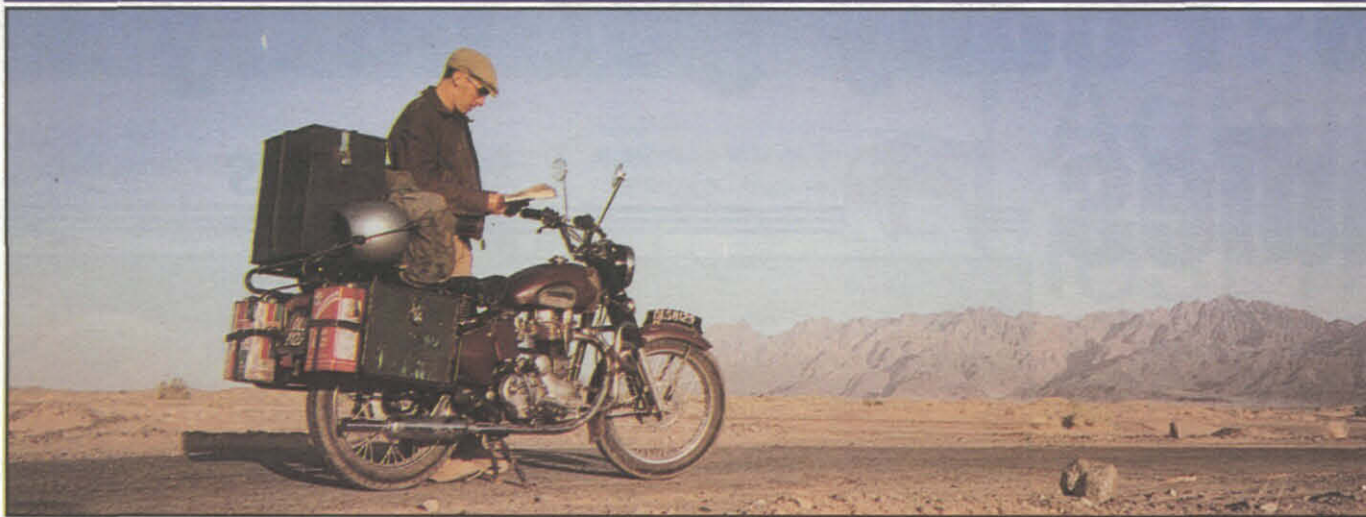
## Fraser is a cut above the rest

THE ANNUAL Westland sword prize for the best air engineer officer training at HMS Sultan has been won by Lt Fraser Cropper.

Lt Cropper joined in 1982 as an artificer apprentice and, after achieving the rate of CPOAEA at 23, gained officer selection in 1992.

He has a first-class honours degree from Plymouth University, and is now working at Portland.

## Delhi to Norfolk on a misfiring Bullet



● You are here - Henry checks directions in Baluchistan, Pakistan.

# Biker proves his calibre

THE PROSPECT of a dull flight home from the Far East prompted a Royal Marines lieutenant to seek a more adventurous form of travel.

Lt Henry Chamberlain, who had spent a year as RM training officer on a remote Indian Ocean island, bought a Royal Enfield Bullet motorcycle in a Delhi auction for £600.

Sadly, the first few kilometres of the 6,000 that lay between Henry and Norfolk suggested the Bullet was more of a popgun; within an hour the handlebars had come off

and the head gasket exploded.

Crossing from India to Pakistan, at a top speed of 40mph (electrical fault) and feeling like a pizza delivery scooter (welded metal box carrying possessions), Henry coped with breakdowns, punctures, potholes and dangerous drivers.

*Problems were usually quickly - and cheaply - solved with the help of the crowds of locals who gathered at each stop; one Indian mechanic spent six hours on repairs to a wheel, presenting Henry with a parts and labour bill for £3.*

Border checkpoints often proved difficult, with the bike being stripped down in search of drugs, and getaways from tight spots proved tricky with a top speed nudging 15mph, depending on the state of the 350cc engine and bike.

Days would pass without Henry



● Drinks break - Henry slakes his thirst by a desert road.

meeting a living soul, but when the Bullet broke down in a cold, deserted Turkish mountain pass a couple of policemen offered a tow.

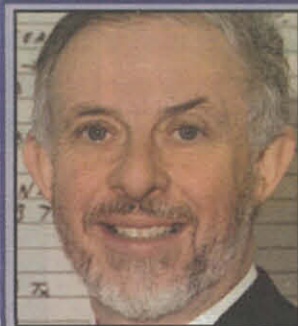
Henry ended up weaving from side to side behind the car at speeds of 60mph.

On returning to the UK, Henry had the bike overhauled and serviced at a cost of £800.

The mechanic who carried out

the work told him "a death trap like this couldn't make it to the curry house, let alone India."

The trip took seven weeks and Henry said it was a wonderful experience - though the element of fun was sometimes elusive, such as the time Henry "found myself simultaneously vomiting and voiding my bowels in a boiling out-house somewhere in deepest India."



● CPO Alan Baker.

## Long-service chief retires

AFTER 34 years, six months and 20 days, CPO Alan Baker has retired as the longest-serving rating.

Chief Baker joined HMS Raleigh in September 1963 as a junior seaman 2, later training as a radar plotter.

A CPO for 16 years, his last draft was as Assistant Commander of the Port at HM Naval Base, Portland. He remained on the staff of the Queen's Harbour Master after the base shut, making him the last rating to serve at Portland.



● Lt Cdr Guy Hope.

## Officer's work commended

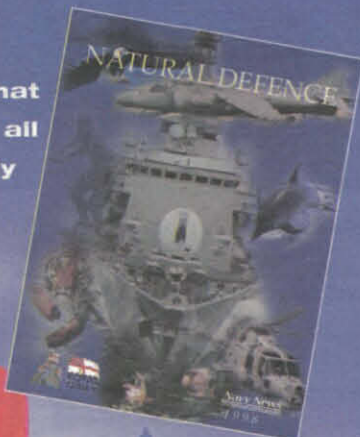
AN OFFICER has been commended for his work in the Netherlands.

Lt Cdr Guy Hope went on exchange to serve in the Admiralty in the Diesel, Gas Turbine and Transmission Section.

He was presented with a certificate by Rear Admiral Spaans, Netherlands Director Materiel (Navy) in recognition of his excellent work in that section.

# 98 NAVY NEWS CALENDAR

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● Three members of the Falkland Islands contingent have put right an oversight by allowing a sergeant into the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' mess at the Mount Pleasant complex. Sergeant Duke is the British Forces Falkland Islands' mascot dog, and his visit was arranged by Sgt Dave Nellist (RAF, left), WO2 Colin Wright (Int Corps, centre) and CPO Sharky Ward RN.

● "It must be here somewhere" - Testing the theory that commanding officers have no heart are Nursing Officers of the UK Support Unit HQ CINCIBERLANT in Portugal. Lt Suzanne Rankin QARNNS (left) is taking over from Lt Cdr Helen Allkins QARNNS (right). The expression on Lt Cdr Peter Johnson's face indicates the myth is true, but Lt Cdr Johnson, CO of the UK Support Unit, assured Navy News that they found the heart shortly after the picture was taken.

Picture: POA(PHOT) Iggy Smith.



## People in the News



● Rear Admiral Thomas.

### Dad steps in as VIP falls ill

AN ILLNESS opened the way for what is believed to be a first for the Navy.

Rear Admiral Paul Thomas was at the RN air station Yeovilton to see his son, S/Lt Dan Thomas, receive his certificate for completing commando operational flying training.

But Admiral Thomas, a submariner and Chief Strategic Systems Executive, ended up presenting the certificate to Dan himself when the original guest fell ill – believed to be the first time a presenting officer has handed an operational flying certificate to his own son.



● S/Lt Thomas.



● Success on the cards – Lt Mike Tipper puts in some light training with four decks for the World Memory Championships in August.

# Memory man hits the decks

MEMORY man Mike Tipper has hit the decks in order to climb the world memory rankings.

Lt Tipper came fifth in last year's World Memory Championships, with only a few months training.

"I've been interested in memory and memorising techniques for about 15 years but I've only taken it seriously in the last 18 months," said Mike, who works at the MOD Procurement Executive at Abbey Wood, near Bristol.

"I went along to a competition, watched what was going on, and I thought I can do that."

Now the 32-year-old submarine engineering specialist is putting in some intensive training in the hope that he can see off his rivals in London during the August Mind Sport Olympics.

He can already remember the entire contents of six packs of playing cards, the correct sequence of 740 binary numbers and 512 randomly-chosen numbers.

"I think anyone can do what I do," said Mike.

"It is a matter of learning the right techniques and putting in a lot of hard work. You could teach anyone the basic techniques in ten minutes."

Mike links cards with images of events and people, stringing them together into a story or journey to allow him to recall the sequence.

"You have to have faith in your memory – you never know if the links are all going to be there and competitions are mentally very tiring," he said.

"After seven hours of remembering it's like trying to think through treacle."

Mike hopes training will double the capacity of his memory – and can see benefits for his work.

"Although memorising multiple packs of cards and streams of binary numbers doesn't serve any direct practical purpose, the actual process helps stimulate and exercise the mind and the techniques used can be applied quite easily to great effect in your daily life."



● LS Derek MacKenzie.

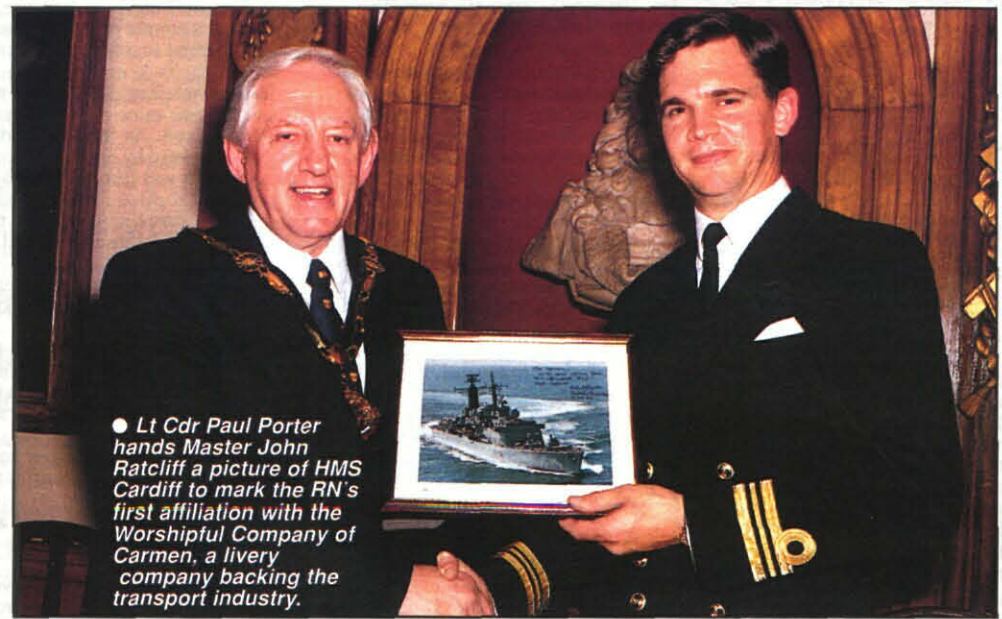
### Term prize in safe hands

A SAILOR'S contribution to safety and security of Fleet weapons in the HMS Excellent armoury was recognised with the award of the establishment's termly efficiency prize.

LS Derek MacKenzie, who joined in 1980, was given the prize in recognition of the many times he provided support to the RN Ceremonial Training Officer as a member of the support team in charge of transport and safety of ceremonial weapons and equipment.

This included preparations for transferring the Stone of Destiny to Edinburgh last year.

Derek often gave up weekends to help, and gives up more of his time outside working hours to issue, control and secure weapons used by reservists on drill nights.



● Lt Cdr Paul Porter hands Master John Ratcliff a picture of HMS Cardiff to mark the RN's first affiliation with the Worshipful Company of Carmen, a livery company backing the transport industry.



## RN barber Norman cuts loose

A MAN who has spent 45 years on the fringe of the Royal Navy has retired at the age of 65.

Norman Thorne became ship's barber on board HMS Albion in 1953, and in the next 15 years he also served in HM ships Victorious and Hermes.

In 1968 he moved ashore, becoming NAAFI barber at HMS Nelson, but after six years he parted from the NAAFI and set himself up independently.

His retirement means he has been cutting hair at HMS Nelson for 30 years – and to mark the occasion he was presented with a ship in a bottle by the Commodore of HMS Nelson, Commodore John Hart.

● Hair's to a happy retirement – Commodore HMS Nelson, Commodore John Hart, congratulates Norman Thorne.

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## Athletic response to Fairey Barracuda torpedoes slur

YOUR ARTICLE in the February issue on the Fairey Barracuda is mistaken in stating "... it seems the Barracuda never used the weapon (torpedoes) in action."

In late October 1944 the Fleet aircraft carrier HMS Implacable, flying the flag of the C-in-C Home Fleet and escorted by HMS Mauritius, Myngs, Verulam, Volage and Venus and HMCS Algonquin and Sioux, took part, as Force 3, in Operation Athletic.

During the operation Naval aircraft made repeated and successful strikes against enemy shipping off the Norwegian coast between Trondheim and Narvik. On October 28 a torpedo strike by Barracuda aircraft was made, shortly after dawn, against a concentration of large ships inshore.

I have excellent photographs of these aircraft, against a brilliant Arctic sky, before and after their attack. The torpedoes are clearly silhouetted in the former and absent in the latter.

C-in-C signalled his congratulations to Implacable after the operation. I know this

because I was a Midshipman in HMS Mauritius and my Journal confirms it. I find it hard to believe that this was the only occasion on which Barracuda aircraft launched their torpedoes in anger. We shall see! - Rear Admiral J.H. Carlill, Godalming.

WITH REFERENCE to your comments to Major A.J. Donald's letter about man-carrying pods in Barracuda aircraft.

Torpedoes were carried by aircraft of 827 Squadron operating from HMS Furious against an armed convoy in the Bodo leads off Norway in April 1944. Half the squadron aircraft carried bombs for dive bombing. Just as well, as the targets were fortuitously steaming inside a sandbank and most of the torpedoes (four, I think) ran into the ground.

If S/Lt (A) George Green RNRV is still alive and is one of your readers, he can tell you more about it, as he flew as my number two. - Rear Admiral I.G.W. Robertson, Piltown, East Sussex.



● Fairey Barracuda from HMS Implacable prepare to attack enemy shipping in the Bodo area of Norway, October 1944. During Operation Athletic six enemy ships were sunk, a U-boat was damaged and driven ashore, 19 further ships were damaged and two more driven ashore. Only one Firefly aircraft was lost.

## PREFERENCE FOR BEING LOST IN THE SYSTEM

I WAS angered to read the article in December's *Navy News* about the leading wren steward, not because she has been awarded the MBE but because she has been in the same job for 11 years with the promise of a further three years in the same job, because it is not worth moving her now.

Having had two non-preference drafts for my last two shore drafts then being fortunate to be drafted to Raleigh, I find myself looking at another non-preference shore job after just ten months. Also I know of

several instances of people being drafted to sea in their last twelve months of service life.

How can CND justify these differences? - CWEM(O) Holdroyd, HMS Raleigh.

I WAS totally dismayed that LWSTD Lalley had been awarded an MBE for 11 years' service at Chequers and also that she will remain there for her final three years' service.

Another article in the same issue by Capt Naval Drafting stated that the Service had far too many gapped billets and early release in most cases was not feasible. He stated that these individuals are needed by other units who would be delighted to have them, if only for a few months.

In this era of gapped billets, why are we supplying personnel to wait on Prime Ministers, and more to the point, why has this particular individual been allowed to remain in one particular billet for so long?

On completion of my present appointment I will have spent four years in non-preference areas, prior to that, six years at sea, with the possibility of my next appointment being non-preference also.

Why are we still allowing our personnel to be 'lost' in the system, when most units are crying out for personnel to fill their gapped billets? Could someone at Naval Drafting answer my questions and at the same time may I request they have a very close look at all their drafting desks to weed out those 'lost' in the system and ensure fairness to all. WO(MAA) A.J. Loughran, RN Provost Headquarters Scotland.

Commodore Naval Drafting writes: I do understand and accept the concerns expressed in the two letters I have seen about Leading Wren Steward Lalley's draft at Chequers. I hope, however, that readers will recognise that there is a handful of drafts where the benefit to the nation overall outweighs the normal drafting principles which ensure preference and non-preference drafts are shared fairly.

Picking up another aspect of the letters, I am surprised at the amount of time the correspondents say they have spent in non-preference areas and would like them to write to me personally so that I can investigate whether the reasons for this are valid.

## Jenny won't let tar stick

WITH reference to the sexual harassment cases featured in the papers lately, I am writing to state that I have served in the Royal Navy for seven years, both at sea and ashore, and remain proud to be a member of the Armed Forces.

A good sense of humour and a sharp reply to any jovial banter has always seen me through.

A lack of maturity, tact and professionalism is largely to blame as well as the Press being all too pleased to expose Wrens as 'home wreckers' and RN warships as 'love boats'.

Please don't tar us all with the same brush! - A contented Leading Wren, Portsmouth.

## Laundered money

SINCE the withdrawal of Kit Upkeep Allowance (KUA) in April 1992, the financial responsibility for the maintenance and laundering of uniform clothing has been with the individual.

As this is the case and on the understanding that the onus for personal tax queries rests with me, I recently wrote directly to the Inland Revenue to claim flat rate expenses for costs incurred in uniform laundering since April 1992.

The written reply I received states that this very topic has been the subject of discussion between the Inland Revenue and the MOD and remains unresolved.

Whilst I believe ships with a manned laundry carry out free laundering of No 4s and overalls, the some 30-40 MWVs and patrol craft do not have this facility.

Grat issue of washing powder has also become commonplace at sea, however the dry cleaning of uniform and lack of free laundering/washing powder to shore-based personnel continues to place a financial outlay which should be offset with the award of flat rate expenses on individuals' personal taxation. - CPO J. Buchan, BFPO Ships.

## Tragic tale of Thracian's last fight retold

I WRITE as one of the half dozen survivors of HMS Thracian whose photograph appeared in last month's issue.

Of the three old destroyers left to defend Hong Kong (HMS Thracian, Thanet and Scout) Thracian, under the command of Cdr A.L. Pears, was left behind after the other two were sent down to Singapore because, in her temporary role as a fast minelayer, she had a couple of the entrances to Hong Kong harbour to seal up. For commercial reasons, these could only be mined after war started.

Despite constant attacks from aircraft, the minelaying programme was successfully completed and Thracian had to have mine-rails and traps removed and her torpedo tubes and guns replaced. As the ship had to patrol the sea approaches against attack from seaward by night, this could only be done under dockyard crane in daylight. It was just as this change-over was completed that the Jap artillery reached Kowloon and started to shell the ship across the harbour, which meant a very hasty, weaving trip down the harbour and around to Aberdeen to land those wounded by shrapnel.

Whilst out on patrol that black, moonless night, Thracian was ordered to enter harbour at all speed to destroy landing craft that were embarking Japs to invade the island.

It was during this close encounter when, with the help of the MTBs, the invaders were severely mauled, that the port fuel tank was holed. There was a dry dock on the other side of Hong Kong harbour and when, as the ship entered the dock, a heavy air attack blasted the dock gates and pumps and further damaged the ship.

It now being impossible to repair the damaged fuel tank, higher command decreed that the ship should be run aground and blown up after the tubes and guns had been taken off for mounting ashore.

She was grounded on a rock in Repulse Bay; depth charges laid and primed ready for firing when the floating crane had arrived and taken off the armament.

It was at this stage that the Japs arrived on Hong Kong Island and every man jack of Thracian's ship's company were rushed up to Wong ne Chong gap to help stop the surge of Japs across the island only to see, from their positions up in the hills, their ship being dive-bombed (unsuccessfully) day after day until Hong Kong surrendered and they were herded into prison camp.

After some months the Japs were able to patch the old ship and steam her up to Japan where she was used as a training trials ship of some sort. When Japan surrendered, the Navy 'reclaimed her own'. Thracian was brought down to Hong Kong by a Naval steaming party before being broken up for scrap. - T. Quilliam, Torpoint.

THE PHOTOGRAPH in the February issue was indeed taken in Yokosuka Harbour after she was returned to the Royal Navy (the White Ensign is just visible).

Following her capture she was commissioned into the Japanese Imperial Fleet in 1942 and used as a patrol boat (Patrol Boat No.101), possibly also with the name 'Yukaze' ('Evening Breeze').

Due to deterioration in the engine room etc, she was subsequently transferred to the Yokosuka Torpedo School in 1944 as Special Training Ship No.1 ('Tokio I Go Renshu Tui') and thence as an experimental radar ship, hence the mast.

T.J. Vaughan is somewhat incorrect in stating that Thracian was a sister-ship to the Skate. The latter was one of nine Admiralty R-class boats built during the years 1915-17 which had three small, round, unevenly spaced funnels of the same height. Skate appears to have been the only one of this class with the mast.

Thracian, however, was one of 52 ships built as Admiralty S class (known as the S and Ts, modified R boats) with two funnels of differing heights, built 1917 and later. Five of these S class were modified for minelaying duties, as was Thracian, and indeed she was still undertaking this task when the battle for Hong Kong took place.

Her story, and those of her crew of that particular commission, is both heroic and tragic. She herself was eventually sold for scrap and broken up on the China Station circa 1948/49 after unsuccessful attempts to make her seaworthy enough to come home.

Very few of her crew came back as a result of incarceration in POW camps and their number has now dwindled to a handful. - Mrs J. Naylor, Plymouth.

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## Entry rules are eased

NATIONALITY and residency rules for entry into the Armed Forces are to be relaxed from next month.

Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid announced parents of applicants will no longer need to be British or Commonwealth citizens, or Republic of Ireland nationals. The five-year UK residency rule is also to be relaxed.

Dr Reid said: "I believe these rule changes will ensure that our Armed Forces will become far more open for potential recruits, especially amongst the ethnic minorities."

Rules about the applicant's nationality remain – they must be a British, British Dependent Territories or Commonwealth citizen or a Republic of Ireland national.

## Dunkirk group will disband

THE VETERANS of the Dunkirk evacuation are planning to "disband with dignity" in the year 2000.

Mr Jim Horton, secretary of the 1940 Dunkirk Veterans' Association, said: "Our youngest member is 77 or 78, and many members are well into their 80s, so we are getting rather long in the tooth."

"The membership decided we wanted to disband with dignity in about 2000."

The association, formed in 1953, has gone to Dunkirk annually since 1956, and many of the 8,000 or so members will attend the final reunion and pilgrimage to the French port.

## Donor helps RN museum

AN ANONYMOUS donor has brought the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth £300,000 closer to its goal of raising £5 million in redevelopment funds.

The benefactor's name is known to the museum, but he or she has specified that it must not be made public. The gift takes the museum to within £800,000 of its target, most of the total funds so far coming from a £2.8 million lottery grant and over half a million from Hampshire County Council.

## Fishery vessel keeps watch

A ROYAL Navy ship was called in when a dispute broke out between French and Belgian fishermen in the Channel.

Fishery protection vessel HMS Guernsey and a French naval ship stood by as the dispute was settled.

# Pay rise for all – in two stages

## Age of sail still alive in US



● Passing on information – Lt Cdr Claire Bloom USN (seated) with Lt Simon Lewis RNR (left) and SN Nick Hetzer, USN.

Picture: PO(PHOT) Bunny Warren (2SL).

## XOs compare notes on oldest warships

OLD IRONSIDES met the Navy's wooden walls when the first lieutenants of two historic warships compared notes in Portsmouth.

Lt Cdr Claire Bloom USN is Executive Officer of USS Constitution, the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world, and spent a week working closely with Lt Simon Lewis RNR, Executive Officer of HMS Victory.

Accompanying Lt Cdr Bloom was SN Nick Hetzer, Constitution's sailor of the year.

"I'm here to see how history is interpreted in HMS Victory and I'm picking up lots of tips," said Lt Cdr Bloom.

"There are some similarities, but some tremendous differences too – Constitution is a working sailing ship, for one thing."

"Victory is magnificent, and though Constitution is smaller, they are both beautiful ships, very majestic. Both awesome examples of the age of sail."

Victory, at 3,500 tons with 104 guns and a ship's company of 820, is almost twice the size of the American ship and more than 30 years older.

Launched on the talismanic date of

October 21, eight years before the Battle of Trafalgar, Constitution was never defeated in 33 engagements, and earned the nickname Old Ironsides because of her durability.

She is berthed in Boston, Massachusetts, and there is currently no charge for the million visitors she attracts annually, although charging is one aspect of Victory which was of interest to the Americans.

When Constitution set sail in July 1997 – for the first time in 116 years – it also changed the perception of colleagues towards the old frigate's crew.

"We are the only sailors in the Navy – we know how to perform what is almost a lost art. We do not use power or anything, so it's something they respect," he said.

Nick is a topman on the 220ft mainmast, a skill he learnt from scratch after he joined the US Navy in 1995.

From never having sailed before, Nick became a member of the crew which last summer sailed Constitution for the first time this century.

Lt Lewis will visit America in the summer to complete the exchange of hints and information.

EVERYONE in the Navy below the rank of rear-admiral will receive a pay increase of at least 3.75 per cent – but must wait until December to feel the full benefit.

Junior rates can count on a rise over four per cent, in recognition of manpower shortages and growing evidence their pay has slipped behind that of civilian counterparts.

The Government has accepted the recommendations of the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) in full, but will stage the increases, against the body's advice, the first two per cent being implemented on April 1, the remainder on December 1.

With living expenses rising by a maximum of 3.5 per cent, the AFPRB guarantees that everyone will receive a net increase in pay.

The main features of the settlement are: ■ Basic pay: most ranks will receive an increase of about 3.75 per cent; all Able ratings and Marines First Class will get around 4.2 per cent.

■ The X-factor remains unchanged at 12 per cent.

■ Pension abatement stays at seven per cent.

■ Service pensions will increase from April 1. Pensions of people leaving between April 1 and November 30 will be based on the April 1 rate; those leaving after December 1 will receive the full amount.

■ Service family quarter and single accommodation charges will rise by an average of 2.7 per cent in rental (excluding water charges), depending on quality.

Accommodation charge increases will be staged in proportion to basic pay.

■ Food charges will go up by 1.5 per cent, which will come into full effect in April.

■ Committal bonuses paid to other ranks after seven and a half years service will increase by a quarter to £2,500; there will be no change to four and a half year bonuses.

■ Length of service increment (LSI) will be increased and staged.

### Illustrative daily rates of pay:

Ord/Mne Scale 2 (uncommitted):	Pay now: £27.36; Apr 1: £27.91; Dec 1: £28.39
AB/MNE 1 Scale B (uncommitted):	£37.60; £38.35; £39.19
LH/Cpl Scale A (Career):	£50.52; £51.53; £52.40
PO/Sgt Scale B (Career):	£55.44; £56.55; £57.50
PO Artificer (Career):	£60.84; £62.05; £63.10
CSgt (non-tech) Scale A (Career):	£62.19; £63.43; £64.51
CPO Scale A (Career):	£62.99; £64.25; £65.34
CPO Artificer Scale A (Career):	£71.96; £73.40; £74.65
CCPO (Career):	£74.81; £76.31; £77.61
WO2 (Non-tech) (Career):	£68.37; £69.74; £70.92
Warrant Officer (Career):	£72.42; £73.87; £75.12
Lieutenant (on appointment):	£67.56; £68.91; £70.09
Lt Cdr (on appointment):	£85.67; £87.38; £88.88
Commander (on appointment):	£120.86; £123.28; £125.39
Captain (on appointment):	£140.47; £143.28; £145.74
Commodore (on appointment)/Capt O/6:	£172.41; £175.86; £178.88

## Minimum wage exclusion agreed

THE Armed Forces will be excluded from the provisions of the National Minimum Wage Bill.

The main problem was that the National Minimum Wage will be expressed as an hourly rate, whereas the Armed Forces are paid a daily rate for 365 days a year, reflecting the fact that servicemen and women have an unlimited liability for work whether on or off duty.

Measuring hours worked by individuals is regarded as potentially divisive, as well as requiring a major administrative effort – a view shared by several other NATO nations which operate similar exemptions.

The AFPRB will continue to monitor civilian pay trends following the introduction of the national minimum wage, thereby safeguarding personnel from falling below the threshold.

■ Additional allowances, including flying pay, submarine pay and longer separated service allowance will increase by 3.75 per cent, staged as with basic pay. A fundamental review of all types of additional pay is due to be carried out this year.

■ Nuclear propulsion senior rates supplement will be restructured to increase differential between category A and category B rates, recognising the growing shortage of category A nuclear watchkeepers. The new A rate will be £12.15 per day, while the former category B will be paid at two rates: of £3.04 and £6.07 per day. Transitional arrangements will apply.

■ Training bounties for reserves will be set at the following levels for the training year ending March 31, 1998: year one £300, year two £650, year three £1,000, year four £1,050. Limited training commitment bounties will be proportionately set.



● Sampling the famous oranges of Seville are (from left) AB Pony Moore, WEM(O) Jim Dent and WEM(R) Jonah Jones of HMS Roebuck. The Devonport-based ship was the first RN ship to visit the Spanish city for more than a decade, and the ship's commanding officer and company were given a warm welcome at a number of social events. Sightseers from the survey ship, which was deployed on NATO exercises, took in the historic city's maritime museum and the largest Gothic cathedral in Europe, built in the 12th century.

Picture: LA(PHOT) Andy White.

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# Flight deck crew are no longer in the dark

ASSAULT ship HMS Fearless is the first warship in the world to take advantage of a breakthrough in night flying technology.

While in dock in Portsmouth, the ship's flight deck lights were fitted with a revolutionary filter which makes them almost invisible to pilots using night vision goggles.

Previously, flight deck personnel had to work in total darkness while at night flying stations as the deck lighting would shut down NVGs.

The filters have also been fitted to lights in the landing craft dock which used to cause a bloom in the goggles during approach and take off.

Made by Avimo Ltd of Somerset, the custom-made glass filters give out a pale blue light with almost all infra-red suppressed.

During her maintenance period the ship also had her 42-ton stern gate replaced, a 1007 radar fitted, new air conditioning units installed and her communications equipment upgraded.

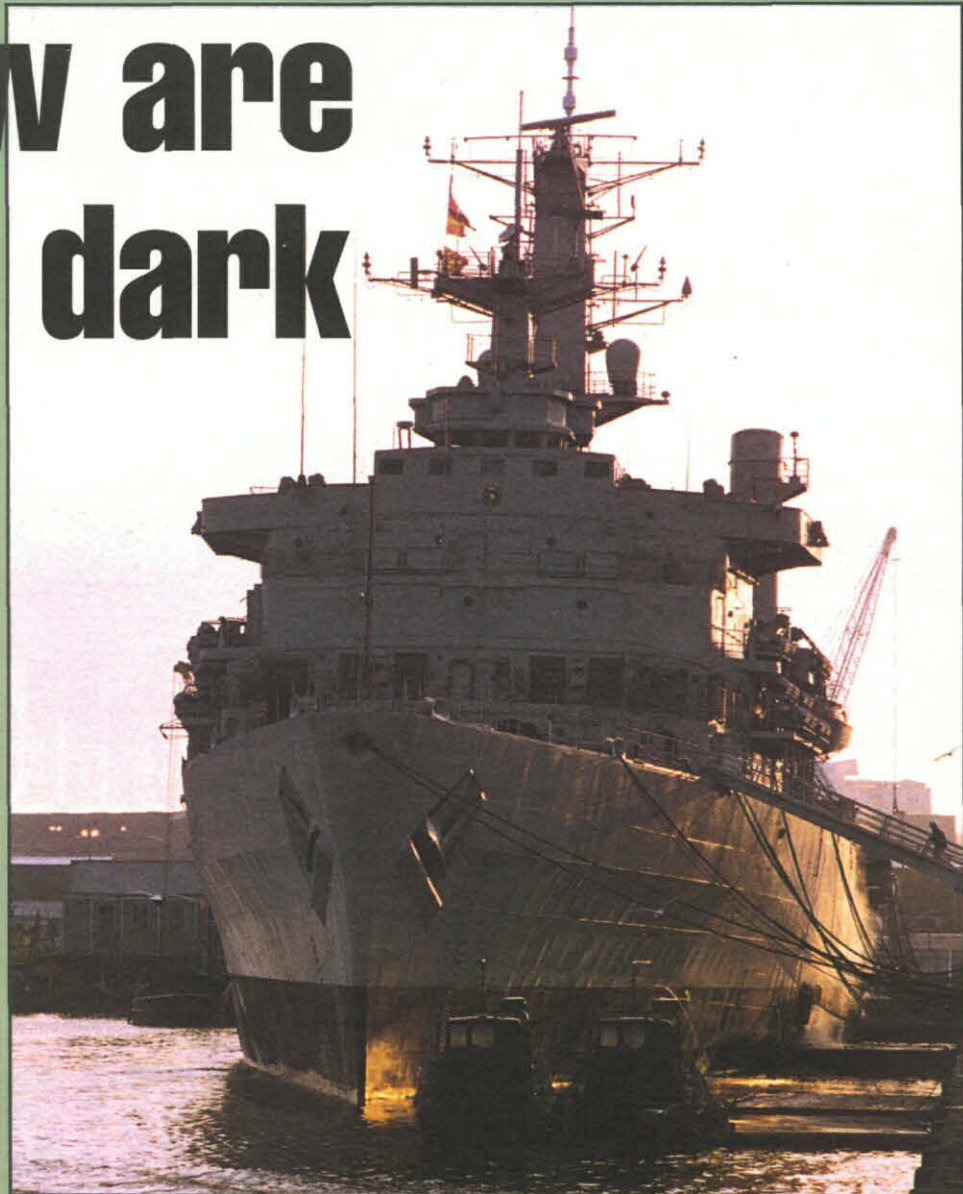
As Navy News went to press, Fearless had just completed Operational Sea Training at Plymouth and was sailing for Norway to take

part in the amphibious exercise Green Wader. From there, she will sail to France and on to Spain as the ship plays a key role in exercise Strong Resolve, the largest maritime NATO exercise ever undertaken. (See page 40).

## Training programme

While the ship was in maintenance at Portsmouth, personnel paid a visit to her affiliated town of Scarborough and undertook a plethora of training packages.

These included flight deck work at Culdrose, weapons tests at Tipner, diving at Horsea Island, NBCD at Phoenix, the dunker at Yeovilton, gunnery at Cambridge and navigation and ops room training at HMS Dryad.



● Night flying operations on HMS Fearless (left) have been transformed by the new deck lighting system. The ship has completed her assisted maintenance period in Portsmouth (above) and operational sea training at Plymouth, and will be sailing to Norway, France and Spain to take part in exercises Green Wader and Strong Resolve. Pictures: LA(PHOT) Andy Pratt.

## Helping Hands

### In brief

TEAMS of six are invited to compete in an all-day fund-raising event at the Royal Sailor's Home Club in Portsmouth on April 1.

Games will include a tug of war, crib, uckers, dominoes, and bowling, and there is a quiz and disco in the evening.

All proceeds go to the Wessex Children's Hospice. For details, contact Mr David Wyatt on 01705 824231.

801 SQUADRON raised £1,100 for sufferers from the rare illness Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome during their deployment in HMS Illustrious last year.

The disorder affects connective tissue such as the skin, joints, teeth and heart and can be fatal.

The money was raised with the help of Illustrious's POs Mess and was presented to the EDS Support Group by Lt Cdr Clive Baylis, CO of 801 NAS.

WARRANT officers and senior rates at HMS Drake raised £1,500 for a support group for Service families who have children with special needs.

The Anchor Support Group is helping more than 50 families in the Plymouth area, helping with day-to-day needs and organising outings and parties for the youngsters.

The money was raised through a cabaret night and meat and wine raffles and the was presented to the Anchor Group by Mess President, WO D.G. Williams.

## Year of the seafarer nets £1.3m

KING George's Fund for Sailor's is celebrating one of its most successful fund-raising years ever.

KGFS's supporters responded to the 'Year of the Seafarer' fund-raising initiative with record-breaking voluntary donations totalling almost £1.3 million.

Grants to nautical charities during the year totalled nearly £3 million, with over half going directly to Royal Naval charities.

KGFS spokesman George Maskell said: "The Year of the Seafarer really caught people's imagination. We went well beyond our fund-raising target of £1.1 million."

"More than half of the money collected last year went to Royal

Navy charities, and the support that we received from people in the Service was very significant indeed.

### Premiere

Major events in 1997 included a lottery which raised more than £50,000 and a premiere of the Band Film *Tomorrow Never Dies* at sixteen cinemas throughout the UK.



● Tomorrow's World presenter Philippa Forrester picks the winners of the KGFS National Raffle. The draw raised £50,000.

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35, SINGLE FEMALE, GSOH, looking for male penpals for friendship **BOX MAR 4**

INTELLIGENT 29, female seeks a male penfriend **BOX MAR 5**

FEMALE 35, GSOH Interests include jets, would like male penfriends **BOX MAR 6**

FEMALE P.E. TEACHER (32) Sporty. Requires caring male similar age. **BOX MAR 7**

TALL, SPORTY ATTRACTIVE Male seeks female penfriend 17-21. **BOX MAR 8**

SINGLE MUM, 35 Seeks single Navy man 32+ for relationship. **BOX MAR 9**

FEMALE GSOH, seeks penfriend preferably on board ship ie HMS INVINCIBLE. **BOX MAR 10**

PRETTY SLIM Brunette 33 seeks male forces penfriend - please write **BOX MAR 11**

ATTRACTIVE 29, Single looking for penfriend and more age 23-29. **BOX MAR 12**

TEENAGE GIRL seeks lonely 16 yr old sailor for correspondence. **BOX MAR 13**

SINGLE FAIR-HAIRED 45, dancing, travelling 5ft 6ins. Non smoker. **BOX MAR 14**

WIDOWER 60's. Ex RNWO, GSOH, N/S, solvent, House/car, needs TLC **BOX MAR 15**

PRETTY REDHEAD 33, GSOH seeks man in a million **BOX MAR 16**

TWO MAD FEMALES Twenty something seek sailors/marines for weekend fun **BOX MAR 17**

EX - QARNNS OFFICER 40 seeks male companion - many interests **BOX MAR 18**

CLIFF - Remember fireman's strike, plantation New Year, never forgotten. **BOX MAR 19**

LYNSEY, 20 loves pubs/clubs GSOH seeks penpal 20-27 **BOX MAR 20**

2 "FINTASTIC" MERMAIDS seek mariners to scale the high seas **BOX MAR 21**

MALE, 29, In the civil service seeks female for correspondence **BOX MAR 22**

ATTRACTIVE SINGLE Female, 39, seeks male 30 - 45 for friendship/relationship **BOX MAR 23**

HANTS BASED Divorcee 51 years seeks sincere male for friendship **BOX MAR 24**

ATTRACTIVE SLIM FEMALE 5'7" divorced 49 needs genuine TLC penfriend **BOX MAR 25**

CLAIRE, 24 5'4", slim redhead seeks sailor for friendship/romance **BOX MAR 26**

FEMALE FUN loving, cuddly 24 yrs looking for 24-30 male, GSOH **BOX MAR 27**

KATE 36 5'6" dark brown hair & eyes likes Rugby union, music and socialising. **BOX MAR 28**

FEMALE 24 GSOH seeks friendship/correspondence with friendly young seaman **BOX MAR 29**

SUTTON COLDFIELD quality, slim, lady 52 N/S seeks gentlemen friend **BOX MAR 30**

DEVON GIRL seeks correspondence with tall GSOH sailor/marine (34-42) **BOX MAR 31**

TWO SINGLE females, 20's seek tall Naval penfriends/love 25-35 **BOX MAR 32**

PROFESSIONAL LADY seeks tall male 40+ for penpal/genuine friendship **BOX MAR 33**

I'M GEORGIE female 21, blonde, blue eyes, & loves clubbing + football **BOX MAR 34**

FUNLOVING FEMALE 31 seeks sailor/marine 28-38 for friendship, possible romance **BOX MAR 35**

ASIAN FEMALE well presented own home/car seeks male 45-70 **BOX MAR 36**

### PERSONAL

PENPAL MAG for adults, choose yourself a new penfriend from over 500 photos. APPROVAL copy from MATCHMAKER, (A10) Chorley PR7 4BS, or ring 01257 480155 (24hours).

### WEDDING

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## Get wise on DCIs



'Rating ready for discharge, Sir!'

# Sailors to get the bullet for small-arms test failures

**FOR THE first time, sailors who do not come up to standard in handling personal weapons risk being discharged from the Navy.**

Ratings who fail the Naval Annual Personal Weapons Test before completing their new entry training at HMS Raleigh will be sent to the Navy's gunnery school at HMS Cambridge for further small arms training. After that, if they fail the test again, they could be discharged as unsuitable.

Ratings may not go on to the specialist training schools or join the trained strength until they have passed the weapons test.

The test must also be passed by all personnel required to carry arms, but not by those female personnel who have exemption - claimed by March 1, 1990 - from carrying and using weapons.

### Pass rate

New entry medical ratings who initially fail the test will also receive further training and a repeat test at HMS Cambridge. But on another failure their papers will be passed to the Naval Manning Agency for review of their employment on a case-by-case basis.

Trained ratings who fail will also undergo training at HMS Cambridge. If they do not pass the second test, their future will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, too.

A Naval spokesman said very few sailors failed to pass the test and that HMS Raleigh and HMS Cambridge reported a very high pass rate. The test involved the ability to hit a target and, more importantly, safe handling procedure.

"Sailors are a lot more competent as a result of the test," he said. "The failure policy will serve to clarify the minds of those few ratings who may otherwise treat the test as a bit of a joke."

DCI RN 4/98

This regular feature gives general information about new Defence Council Instructions affecting conditions of service. If they apply to you, study the full, original text.

## Boat crew to take on Canada's wild river

ONE OF the toughest Joint Services expeditions to be organised will this summer involve the first British open-boat descent of the 673-mile Back River in the wildest part of Canada.

In the words of expedition leader, Major Steve White of the Royal Logistic Corps, the Back River is considered the "most challenging" in the North West Territories. It flows from Sussex Lake to Chantry Inlet in the Arctic Ocean, passing through the uninhabited Barrenlands for its entire length.

The river passes over many falls and more than 80 sets of rapids, some of which do not appear on any map. Landscape varies from rugged and forbidding rock to gently rolling hills, and is populated by a variety of wildlife, including bears.

Major White said the boat will be manned by a team of six. "This will prove to be a challenging expedition which will stretch team members and equipment to the limits in an environment in which we will not even be at the top of the food chain," he said.

Applicants for the expedition, during July and August, should apply to him at Maindy Barracks Cardiff. **DCI JS 139/97**

Part of the UK Gurkha recruit selection camp at the foot of the Himalayas in Nepal has been made available for Joint Services adventurous training. The area is ideal for mountaineering, high-level trekking and white-water canoeing.

Facilities and equipment at the camp - the British Gurkha Pokhara (BGP) - are available through the authority of the HQ, British Gurkhas Nepal. **DCI JS 2/98**

## Find the Joker

FIND THE JOKER in **Navy News** for three editions - and you have a chance to win a super new camcorder - a Sharp ViewCam 8mm VLE66H. The runner-up will win £250, while 25 successful competitors will each get a £10 consolation prize.

All you have to do this month is spot the joker in one of the following three statements by Jack on naval matters. Two are true. One is wildly inaccurate. Just mark the box next to the untrue statement.

Which of these three statements is **NOT** true:

- ☐ The original Greenwich Mean Time was the period in the 18th century when seamen pensioners resident at Greenwich Royal Hospital had to give up sixpence of their pay towards the cost of the establishment.
- ☐ A carrack was the name given to a larger type of European trading vessel of the 14th-15th centuries.
- ☐ HMS Lightning was the first vessel successfully to launch a powered torpedo in 1879.

If you can fill in this coupon as well as those in the next two editions, you have a chance of winning the camcorder. The name of the winner, the runner-up and the consolation prizewinners will be selected at random from those who gave correct answers in the three editions. When you have completed all three original entry forms, send them together in one envelope to:

Find the Joker, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 3HH

They should arrive at **Navy News** no later than **June 15, 1998**. Entries with all three correct answers will be entered in a prize draw conducted at **Navy News** offices. Winners will be announced in the July edition of **Navy News**. The first name drawn will receive a camcorder. There will be one runner-up prize of £250, and a further 25 consolation prizes of £10. The judges' decision will be final, and there is no cash alternative to the camcorder prize. No correspondence will be entered into. **Navy News** employees and their relatives may not enter.

NAME.....

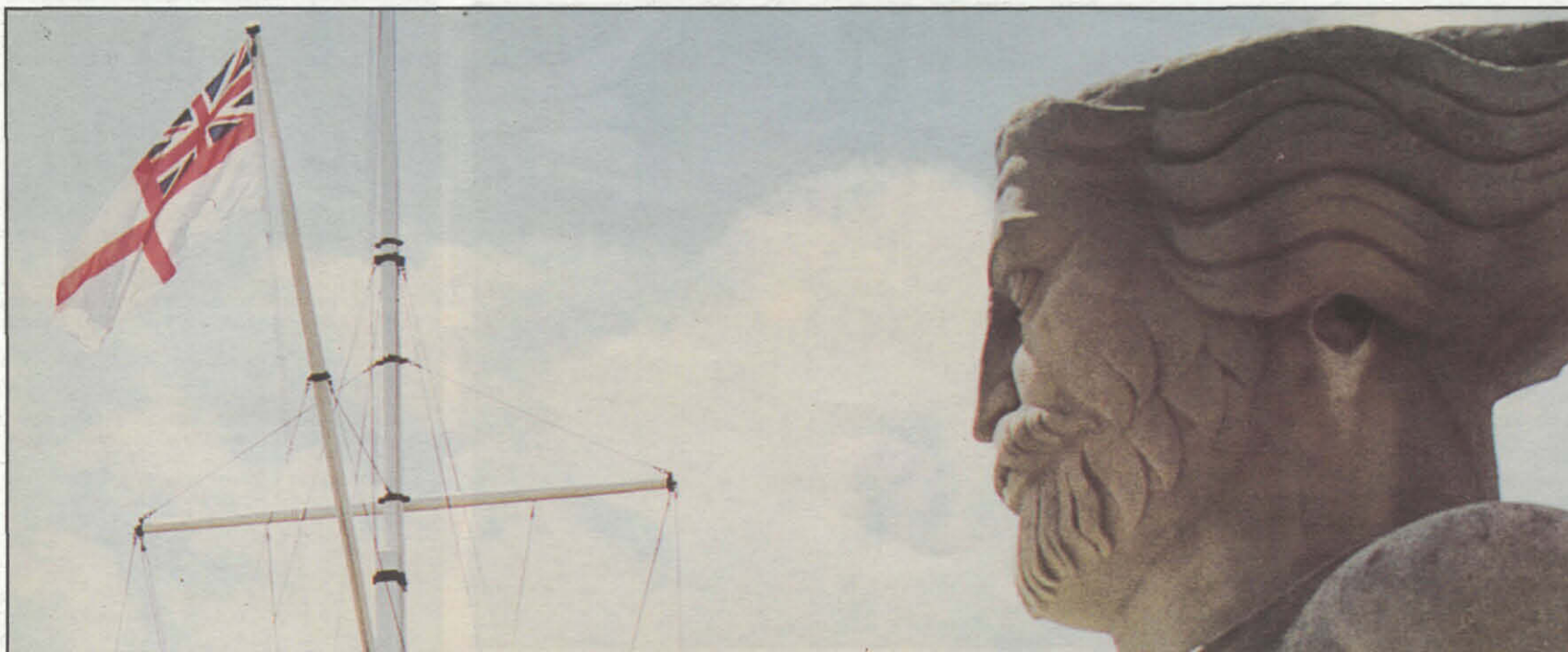
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## Relics of Naval college preserved as other sites are released



● **Stony stare** – one of the statues at the former RN Engineering College at Manadon, Plymouth.

# Statues will be saved

TWO STATUES which stand each side of the entrance to the wardroom building at the former RN Engineering College at Manadon, Plymouth, are to be preserved.

The monolithic figures, representing the figureheads of the ships HMS Thunderer and HMS Marlborough, will be incorporated into a housing and landscape development when the wardroom block is demolished later this year.

The statues were carved in Portland stone in the 1950s by James Woodford RA (1893-

1976), the leading heraldic sculptor of his day. His most famous works are the Queen's Beasts which lined the 1953 Coronation route and now stand in Kew Gardens.

Plymouth City Council's planning control committee have made the retention of the statues a condition of the planning agreement with site owners Courtleigh Properties Ltd, who intend to build 300 houses there.

Despite appeals for the wardroom block to be preserved, the Government Culture Department decided not to list the building as so much of its architectural interest had been removed. However, the planning

agreement does make provision for the building's clock spire to be retained on site.

Campaigner for the wardroom's preservation, Lt Cdr David Way RN (retd), said that while he had lost the fight to preserve the wardroom, he was delighted that the statues would be saved.

Lt Cdr Way, who had served at Manadon, told *Navy News*: "It is very important that we keep as much of our Naval heritage as possible."

Other buildings on the 110-acre site will be preserved – including 17th-century Manadon House, and the former, unconse-

crated RN Church of St John and St James. However the oak pews and other church fittings are being sold by EPL Government Supplies.

Former RN officer Charles Howeson, of EPL, said many of the pews had been bought by Naval personnel; the cross outside the building had gone to a church at Derriford, and the organ had been bought for £5,000 by a church at Liskeard – with the help of a £4,000 donation by EPL.

Anyone interested in acquiring further material from the church should call Mr Howeson on 01752 341177.

## New ideas for disused buildings

A FORMER Naval research establishment which since the 1930s has commanded panoramic vistas from the hill overlooking Portsmouth, may be developed as a hotel and conference centre.

The Portsmouth Main complex, whose architecture includes classic art deco design, was closed in 1996 as a Defence Evaluation and Research Agency centre. Now, the Defence Sales Agency plans to sell the 46-acre site this year – probably for several million pounds.

Portsmouth City Council has already issued a planning brief which lays down what use should be made of the land and buildings. It specifies that the site should be used for job-creating schemes which could include a mixture of industrial offices, hotel, conference facilities, holiday accommodation and other commercial leisure uses.

When the site closed, DERA's maritime warfare research staff moved to the agency's nearby base of Portsmouth West.

■ The sale of the former Seaton Barracks in Plymouth is expected to be completed by the spring – and work on redevelopment could begin in the summer.

The 235-acre site, formerly a Marines barracks, is likely to be bought by the Government-sponsored English Partnerships.

## Reserves block is renamed

AN ILLUSTRIOUS Reservist has been honoured with the renaming of an accommodation block at HMS Raleigh.

Tisdall Division recalls S/Lt Arthur Tisdall, the first Reservist VC, who was posthumously awarded the decoration for his bravery during the landing from the SS River Clyde at Gallipoli in April 1915.

The block, at the Navy's new entry training establishment at Torpoint in Cornwall, was renamed by Commodore Muriel Hocking, the head of the Royal Naval Reserve.

She also presented a framed picture of S/Lt Tisdall to Lt Cdr John Ward, Reserves Course Administrator at Raleigh.

## Trainees take rough with the smooth

TRAINEES on a new course in Scotland are seeing the rough side of the Navy as well as the smooth.

One of the early visits on the RN Personal Development Course was to patrol boat HMS Smiler in the Clyde estuary – and the ride proved a little lumpy for some.

"Part of it was a bit rough, and the bucket was passed about quite frequently, but we found it very educational," said employment and training adviser Fiaz Khan, of the Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre (EMEC) in Glasgow.

"It was a good day out, and an introduction into one of the harsher aspects of the Navy."

EMEC, a bridge group between the ethnic community and employers of Glasgow, helped create the Navy-sponsored course, which is delivered by the Glasgow College of Commerce.

The course is part of the Navy's commitment to pos-

itive action on equal opportunities, and was designed for the unemployed in areas of high ethnic minority population – others are planned for Cardiff, the Midlands, London and Leeds.

But the five-week course, which cost £1,500, reflects the Navy's drive to total equality; it is open to everyone, regardless of race or colour, thus avoiding the charge of reverse discrimination.

**It will give the Navy access to sections of the community which are under-represented in the ranks – but the benefits work both ways.**

Trainees will get wages of £10 a week, and get an opportunity to improve comprehension and use of English, mathematics, and general knowledge, as well as increasing their awareness of current affairs and the role of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Course modules include personal development, skill training, motivation and confidence-building, information technology, interview skills and physical fitness training.

Each individual will have an individually-tailored programme and, if they pass the selection criteria, will be invited to embark on a career in the Navy.

They will also receive a Scottish Vocational Qualification on completion of the course.

"The main object from our point of view is to make people aware of what the Royal Navy has to offer as an employer, to let people talk, see, hear, find out – to become educated about a career in the Navy," said Fiaz.

## Women chosen for command of ships



● Lt Melanie Rees.



● Lt Sue Moore.

THE Navy's first female commanding officers of HM ships are due to take up their appointments this month.

Lt Sue Moore is to command HMS Dasher and Lt Melanie Rees will become commanding officer of HMS Express, both Archer-class patrol vessels of the First Patrol Boat Squadron.

Dasher is the Bristol University RN Unit ship, based in Portsmouth, while Express, the Cardiff URNU vessel, is based in Penarth.

Armed Forces minister Dr John Reid said: "These appointments clearly demonstrate the Royal Navy's commitment to full integration of women wherever possible."

Although the smallest ships in the surface flotilla, the patrol vessels have been firmly in the spotlight in recent months.

The First Patrol Boat Squadron, under its former guise as the Inshore Training Squadron, won the Navy's Wilkinson Sword of Peace, and the ships have deployed as far afield as the Baltic and Spain last year.



● **Fair exchange** – HMS Cornwall hosted 40 members of the Cornwall branch of the Normandy Veterans Association as the ship developed her county affiliations before deploying to West Africa. The veterans had lunch at HMS Drake, Devonport, before touring the frigate and swapping stories with the ship's company. Pictured is Cornwall's First Lieutenant, Lt Cdr Clive Carrington-Wood, who exchanged plaques with NVA branch chairman Major David Preece, watched by association members.

## Music exchange mooted

STRONGER LINKS between the Royal Marines School of Music at Portsmouth and the city's university should be in place by the beginning of the next academic year if a new plan for mutual help gets the go-ahead.

About 50 students from the university already join the 61 trainee musicians at the School in the converted Detention Quarters at HMS Nelson for band practice once a week, on an extra-curricular basis.

But if discussions with the university are fruitful, a more formal arrangement will mean that individual tuition at the school will be available as part of the university's curricular activity.

The school's Director of Music Training, Capt John Perkins RM, said benefits to the School of Music would include access to the university library and computer facilities for the trainee musicians, who are expected to undertake first-level music degree work during their two years and eight months at Nelson.

## HMS Cromer renews links

HMS CROMER has renewed links with the ship's associated village of Tarbert in Argyll and Bute.

The weekend was packed with events, including an official reception, a three-hour cruise with more than 50 guests on board, ship's tours, sporting and charity events.

More than £200 was raised for local good causes by the Sandown-class minehunter during the weekend, including the proceeds of a sponsored beard-growing contest.



## Submariners give their views on life in flotilla



● Making a point - RS Ian Lang talks to Rear Admiral James Perowne, Flag Officer Submarines, on HMS Vanguard.

# Admiral leads initiative

AN ACTION plan to improve the working lives of Submarine Flotilla staff has been launched.

The project - Improving Working Practices (IWP) - is the Flotilla's contribution to the Investors in People standard which the MOD expects all sections to achieve by the year 2000.

But by adapting the key principles, appreciating and developing the contribution made by individuals to the team effort, the Flotilla hopes to reach the mark by the end of this year.

As part of the project, Flag Officer

Submarines Rear Admiral James Perowne regularly visits the Fleet's submarines and bases to listen to the views of the men in the front line.

"To be a submariner is to be one of the most intensively trained professionals in the world," said Admiral Perowne.

"The submarine working environment is uniquely demanding, which is why I place such great emphasis on mutual responsibility.

"Teamwork, clear communications and good management are vital to the

success of our objectives and the safety of our people.

Hertfordshire Training and Enterprise Council is assisting in the study of human resource management for the 3,000 service and civilian staff.

An initial survey to gauge expectations and achievements found there was room for improvement, and with FOSM on-side a team has been established to develop a written action plan.

The published plan sets out the Flotilla's goals, and once communicated to all employees, will ensure every-

one knows their role within the system.

During one of his Flotilla visits, Admiral Perowne said he was keen to hear of the experiences of crewmen and to avoid being remote from the units.

"In my early days on boats I remember believing that FOSM was some remote, crusty old Admiral who had no idea what it was like serving in a submarine.

"I never thought that one day I would be that man - I can reassure everyone that I have a very good memory!"

## Loch bed clearance to begin

WORK to clear parts of the sea bed of Holy Loch were due to begin as Navy News went to press.

The operation will remove debris from the floor of the loch, 30 metres down in the area formerly occupied by the submarine base of the United States Navy.

The clean-up operation will begin with a magnet to lift the piles of mainly ferrous debris which litters the sea bed.

A Royal Navy spokesman said: "The debris is hazardous from an entrapment point of view.

Trawlers or anglers would get their lines snagged, and it would be a danger to divers.

"There is no radiological hazard in Holy Loch - extensive monitoring and investigation of the sea bed by independent analysts have confirmed that."

The first phase of the operation will take four or five weeks, but the programme will not be completed for some time as work will only take place during the autumn and winter.

Any debris lifted will be carefully examined, and once identified as being harmless it will be taken by skip to be recycled.

On completion, the sea bed will have been returned to the level it was before the US submarines arrived in 1963.

The Navy spokesman said they expected to find a wide assortment of residential and industrial cast-offs from the last 30 years - everything from drinks cans to scaffold poles, possibly totalling thousands of tons.

Widespread consultation by the MOD with local authorities, politicians and environmental agencies determined that a clear-up was the best way to proceed, said the spokesman.

"We do not want to be responsible for handing over an area of sea to civil authorities which is not in a clean and fit state," he said.

Though the base, which closed in 1992, was American, the UK is responsible for restoring the site under NATO host nation procedures.



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Lisbon parade marks milestone in history of oldest multi-national naval force

# Salute to 30 years of NATO squadron

THE OLDEST multi-national naval force in the world has celebrated its 30th anniversary with six-ship Divisions in Lisbon.

NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic (SNFL) was set up on January 13, 1968 in Britain, and since then has existed as a permanent force of between six and nine ships.

Command is rotated among SNFL's contributing nations who each provide at least one ship. Currently the force is under the command of a Netherlands officer, Commodore Peter van der Graaf, flying his flag in the frigate HNLMS Tromp.

Britain is represented by the Type 42 destroyer HMS Manchester and the fleet tanker RFA Olona. Other SNFL frigates are the USS Robert G. Bradley, Canada's HMCS Toronto, Germany's Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Spain's Baleares.

Guest of honour at the parade was the Portuguese Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Fuzeta da Ponte. NATO's C-in-C Iberian Atlantic Area, Vice Admiral Alexandre Reis Rodrigues, was also there.

Commodore van der Graaf

said in a speech that the force's task varied from "an old-fashioned, and nowadays not very likely traditional naval engagement, to a much more likely joint operation under unpredictable circumstances, or an exercise with our partners for peace."



● WOM Melanie Coon acts as Britain's standard bearer at the 30th anniversary ceremony in Lisbon, and (below left) some of her ship-mates ensure HMS Manchester's name has a prominent place. They are (l-r) Lt Damien Mallins, AB Lee Jenkins, PO Steve Boswell, Lt Mike McGuire, Lt Victoria Arden and PO Troy Muggleton. Below right: HMS Manchester and other SNFL ships alongside at Lisbon.



Pictures: CPO(PHOT) Stuart Antrobus, NATO Northwood

## BLAST-OFF FOR MOD's NEW SATELLITE PROJECT



FIRST OF A NEW generation of British military satellites launches at Cape Canaveral – witnessed by Capt Bill Fairbairn (right), the man responsible for implementing the UK's military space policy and operational requirements.

Capt Fairbairn was among a team of British military and Ministry of Defence civilian staff watching the Florida launch of Skynet 4D satellite which will provide secure communications to UK forces almost anywhere in the world.

Skynet 4 first entered service ten years ago with three satellites – which are now nearing the end of their operational lives. Skynet 4D, with greater capability, especially in terms of mobility, will replace the 1988 vintage Skynet 4B.

Two more of the new satellites – Skynet 4E and 4F – will be launched from French Guiana this autumn and in September next year.

Their increased power and steerable antennae will give more flexibility to Britain's Armed Forces involved in operations worldwide.

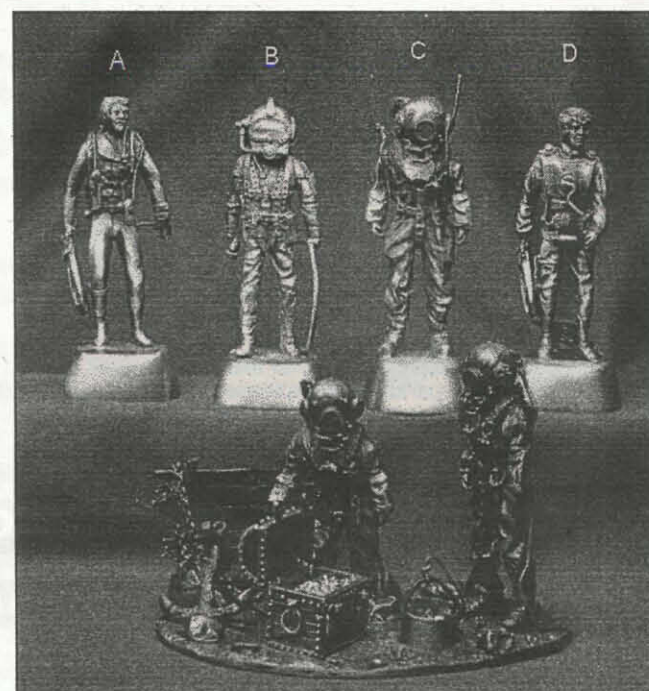
Capt Fairbairn said: "The efforts of many have brought us to this stage. The success of this UK-built satellite will ensure timely continuity and enhanced capability,

enabling a wide range of British defence activities, including joint and coalition operations.

"The design advances allow increased emphasis on tactical mission support, proving vital in many parts of the world, not least to ships at sea."

The satellite was made by Matra Marconi Space and the booster rocket by the US firm Boeing. After trials conducted by Matra Marconi, Skynet 4D will be handed over to MOD this spring, and operated on behalf of the three Armed Services by RAF personnel of 1001 Signals Unit based at Oakhanger.

Also at the launch was the officer who has overall responsibility for 1001 Sigs, Air Vice Marshal Brian Candless, Air Officer Communications Systems and Support Services; and Brigadier Tony Raper, Director Operational Requirements, Information and Communication Services.



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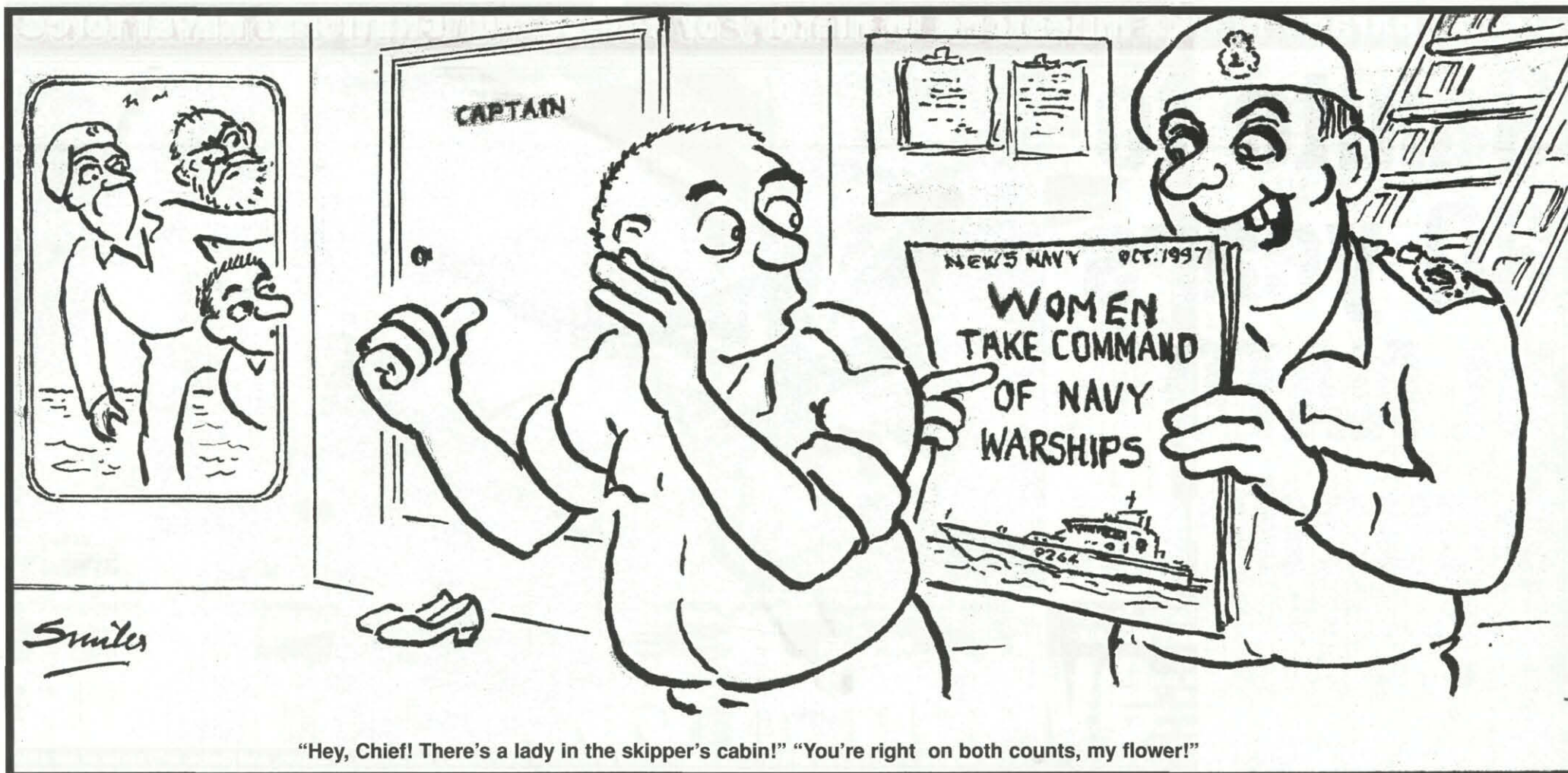
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"Hey, Chief! There's a lady in the skipper's cabin!" "You're right on both counts, my flower!"

## NEWSVIEW

### Something we just have to put up with?

THE PAPERS have lately been full of two stories, running in parallel, of allegations of sexual impropriety. One concerning the President of the United States and the other a junior officer in the Royal Navy.

They had quite a lot in common. Both of the principals involved were accused of behaving in a manner inappropriate to their position. In both cases there were implications for national security ('how can we rely on people who behave like this?'). And in the response from their respective publics there was less of titillation, more of an acute embarrassment that institutions both hold in high esteem were being held up to ridicule.

When is it all going to end, was the cry?

Well, the answer is it won't. However praiseworthy the public record of any individual, so long as public interest (and that of the media) in personal shortcomings retains an ascendancy then that will be where the main focus of interest will stay.

And we are all going to have to put up with that.

The Navy is now operating a central monitoring system to deal with complaints of sexual and racial harassment.

We can confidently predict that this will not spell out the end of these particularly unpleasant forms of bullying. You cannot legislate against prejudice. You can only punish its nastier manifestations.

But the record of 'high jinx on the high seas' as paraded by the popular press each time another misdemeanour is brought to its attention doesn't amount to a molehill of beans when set beside the professional performance of the Navy's young women since they first went to sea just over seven short years ago. The fact that two women have already been appointed in command of HM ships is as clear an indication of that as you could wish for.

Navy life demands high standards of tolerance and an ability to rub along with one's fellow man – and this applies equally to men as to men and women. This writer once had a particular instance of that during an extended trip in one of HM submarines.

The First Lieutenant was a pain in the backside – an opinionated prig who got my goat to the extent that I determined on a showdown.

One lunchtime, when he was holding forth in the boat's tiny wardroom, I did my level best to prick the bubble of his pomposity – expecting the approbation of the rest of those present.

Instead they shuffled uneasily in their seats. I had made a big mistake – they all knew what he was like, but it wasn't my place to show up the faults in a character they had all had to find a way to cope with.

Submariners in particular, who are of necessity more closely confined for long periods than even their surface counterparts, know that lesson very well.

## Salute spells end of an era for the Dolphin battery

THE VETERAN guns of the Fort Blockhouse saluting battery have been fired for the last time by personnel from HMS Dolphin.

The base will decommission in September, and the 21-gun salute to mark the Queen's accession to the throne proved a poignant occasion at the alma mater of the Submarine Service.

The first recorded royal salute was fired from the fort in September 1683, in honour of King Charles II.

Events such as royal birthdays, official birthdays, arrivals of foreign dignitaries, two minutes silences and the return of British warships have been punctuated by gunfire from the battery, the only one in the Portsmouth Harbour area.

The saluting guns are actually even older than HMS Dolphin, being converted 3pdr Hotchkiss guns from the end of the last century.

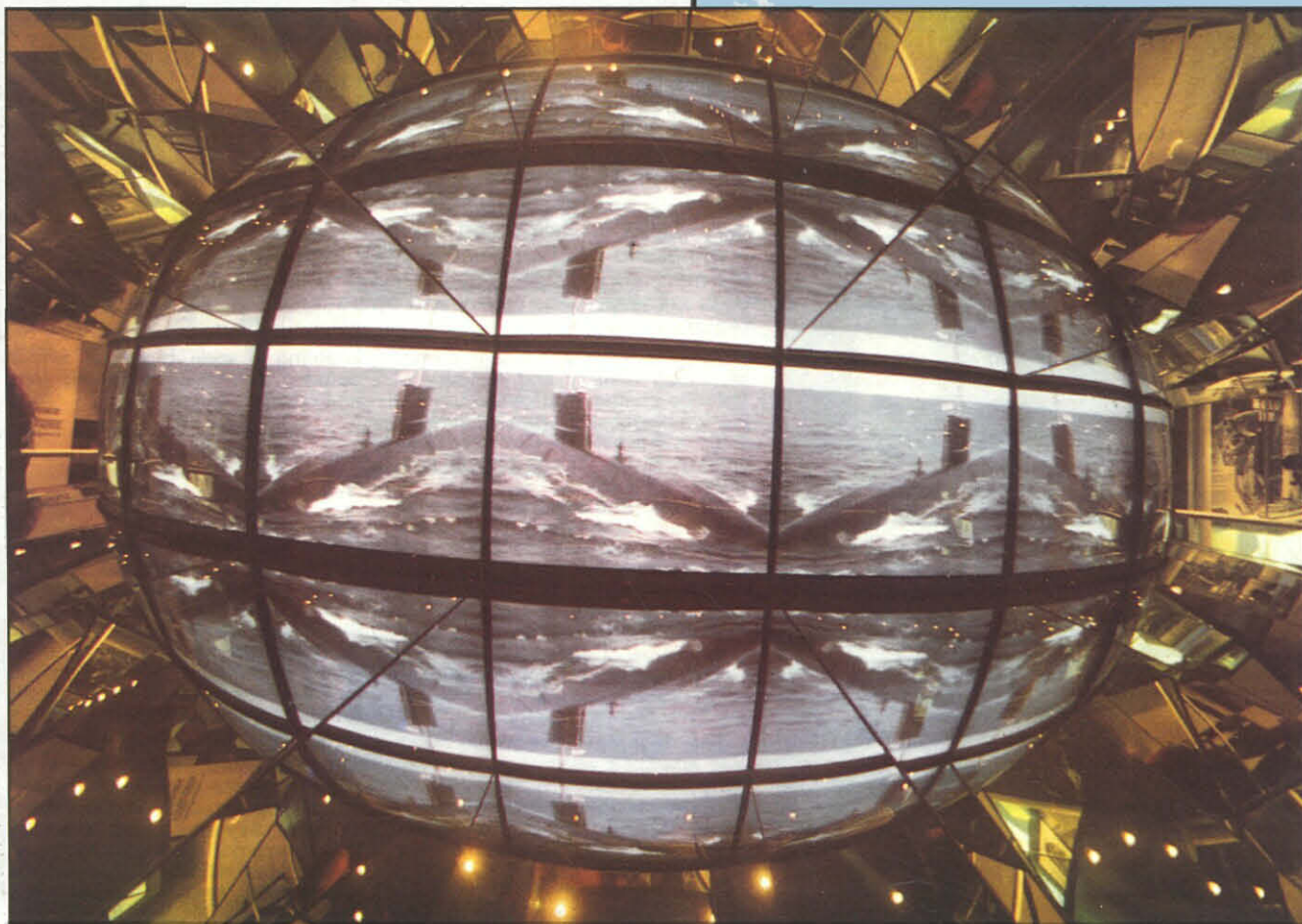
When Dolphin reverts to the tri-Service medical base of Fort Blockhouse in the autumn, a different arrangement will be in place to continue the firings.

## Fish eye view of a hi-tech modern Navy

THIS is 'The Globe Display' at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Gosport – as officially opened by Second Sea Lord and C-in-C Naval Home Command Admiral Sir John Brigstocke.

Sponsored by the Director of Public Relations (Navy), it features the film *The Royal Navy of Today* with images of submarines, ships and aircraft reflected by a series of mirrors to produce a kaleidoscope effect. This is enhanced by surround sound and a series of interpretation boards and models along a 20ft passageway.

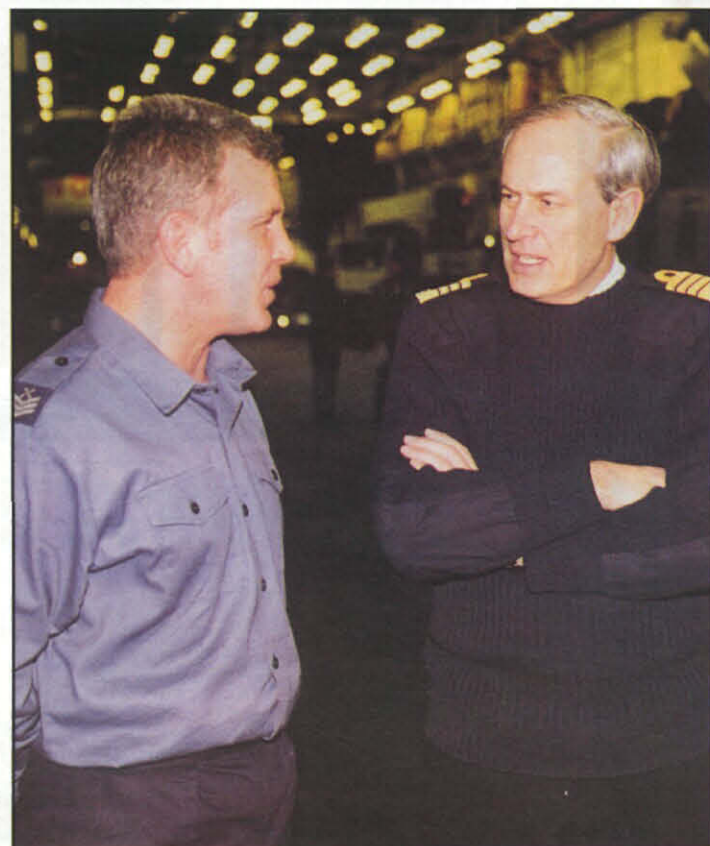
Said Museum Director Cdr Jeff Tall: "The display is a stunning visual effect which uses the latest technology to inform and educate on the role of the modern Royal Navy."





# RAF squadrons now part of the ships' companies for Gulf operation

● An RAF Harrier GR7 launches from HMS Illustrious.



**H**MS ILLUSTRIOUS left the eastern Mediterranean on her way to the Gulf as *Navy News* went to press on February 20. She was due to relieve HMS Invincible in early March.

Her Commanding Officer, Capt Stephen Meyer, told *Navy News* that the ship's company were remarkably cheerful and impatient to finalise their training.

"They're ready for absolutely anything, and – while still hoping for a diplomatic solution – are itching to get to grips with their task in the Gulf."

Supplementing 801 Naval Air Squadron's six Sea Harriers on board are six GR7 Harriers of Laarbruch-based 3 Squadron RAF – whose integration with the life and work of the ship is seen by Capt Meyer as a remarkable success story.

"Unlike 1 Squadron RAF in Invincible, 3 Squadron have never before been on board a ship – and we had only three weeks to work them up. But the training has gone remarkably well, and they have become fully night qualified for carrier operations – something they have achieved in very short order."

While the essential elements of take-off and landing for a VSTOL aircraft on a carrier are similar to

## LIGHT BLUE MEETS LUSTY CHALLENGE

those ashore, a new challenge was presented by the pitching and rolling deck.

To prepare the RAF aircrew for that, intensive training using a simulator and a dummy deck at RN air station Yeovilton helped to bring the pilots to a high level of proficiency before they embarked.

The ground crew also faced their own challenges learning how to make the best use of minimal space on the flight deck and in the hangar. And all RAF personnel had to undergo the basic sea survival course at Portsmouth.

"They have integrate so well, right through from the CO to their

cooks, stewards and stores people," said Capt Meyer.

"We spread the RAF personnel through the mess decks and cabins, the result being that they now feel very much part of the ship's company, and many have made firm friends on board."

To cater for the extra 100-120 RAF personnel, Illustrious's anti-submarine helicopters of 820 Squadron have moved 'home' to the carrier's accompanying supply ship, RFA Victoria.

### Invincible

A similar system is in operation in Invincible where 1 Squadron have, after three months, spent longer on board a carrier than any other RAF squadron.

The ship's CO, Capt James Burnell-Nugent, has found that the RAF personnel have become "quite navalised".

He said: "The RAF are used to being accommodated and working at an air station with families nearby – though the GR7 squadrons are accustomed to being deployed into the field."

"And the way we do business is different. The RAF don't have our divisional system; and being in a ship brings officers and men closer together than life ashore. Nevertheless they do not resent it and have become fully integrated with the life of the ship."

● Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, C-in-C Fleet, visits Illustrious's hangar to get the low-down on life on board from Chief Technician K. P. Tyler RAF. Admiral Boyce flew to the carrier from Gibraltar to spend most of a day on board, watching the combined air group work up for the task ahead.

## Rock Race en masse

BEFORE beginning intensive training in the eastern Mediterranean, Illustrious visited Gibraltar where a team of 100 RN and RAF personnel from the ship took part in a Rock Race.

Male winner was Lt Dave Barrett (21min 45sec) and the first female to complete the course was WAH Jenny Ennis (31min 40sec).

Needless to say, the three

who ran the race in fearnought suits – the executive officer, Cdr D. J. R. Dickens; Lt Tim Hutchins and WO Ian Shepherd – stood no more chance of winning than soggy chips in a galley fire.

But Lt Hutchins did raise £320 for 849 NAS's charity Dreamflight, which takes seriously ill children for the 'holiday of a lifetime' to Florida's Disneyworld.



● RAF personnel embark in HMS Illustrious at Portsmouth.

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# HARRIERS OVER

## 'As I speak, four Sea Harriers and four GR7s are flying over Iraq...'

■ From front page

air missiles and RAF Harrier GR7s as the precision bomber, together displaying state-of-the-art technology at the cutting edge of the allied force.

"We have a sustainable capability which is open-ended."

Meanwhile, the Sea Harriers and GR7s have been taking their part in 'Southern Watch' operations over Iraq to police the no-fly zone imposed on Saddam Hussein after the Gulf War of 1991.

"As I speak, four of our Sea Harriers and four GR7s are flying together over Iraq," said the Commanding Officer of Invincible, Capt James Burnell-Nugent. "The two types of Harriers are complementary twins, the FA2s providing air-defence escort for the GR7s which have a greater precision bombing capability."

He said the arrival on board of a GR7 with special laser equipment had enhanced the capability of his force of 15 Harriers. "The GR7-mounted laser now gives us autonomous capability to designate our own targets (for 'smart bombs') and have our own thermal imaging."

The COs of both Invincible and her replacement, HMS Illustrious (Capt Stephen Meyer), are keen to reassure families as to the Iraqi threat to the task group as a whole. "Saddam Hussein has very little capability to deliver weapons against warships in the Gulf," said Capt Meyer.

"The risk is absolutely negligible, and all our training is aimed at further closing the gap between a negligible risk and no risk at all. And describing the task group's attitude to defensive measures as confident, but not complacent. Admiral Forbes said the threat of a chemical or biological warfare attack on the ships was assessed as low."

"We don't discount it completely, and we have equipment in place to deal it, though such an attack (on the ships) is not a credible option for Saddam Hussein."

■ The first group of trainees from Kuwait arrived to begin military training at HMS Raleigh, the Royal Navy's new entry establishment at Tor Point. Under a two-year contract, Britain will provide naval training for up to 300 officers and ratings of the Kuwaiti navy.

The multi-million pound contract provides for training for the crews and base maintenance personnel of new patrol boats.

## Naafi staff in the Gulf

NAAFI HAS 20 staff in Royal Navy ships in the Gulf, serving personnel through its Naval Canteen Service (NCS). It also has two members of the Expeditionary Forces Institute to Kuwait to serve the RAF detachment there.

NCS offers a range of necessities and luxuries, including cigarettes, confectionery, toiletries and a 'home' flower delivery service.

Last month Naafi loaded RFA Fort George at Glen Mallen, near Faslane, with over 3,000 man-months of supplies. To maintain supplies, canteen managers are also calling at the Gulf region's ports including Dubai, Kuwait City and Bahrain.



## THE PICTURES

● **LEFT:** RAF Harrier GR7s conduct deck landing exercises in HMS Illustrious.

● **BELOW:** A Royal Navy pilot checks an AMRAAM missile before take-off from HMS Invincible.

● **RIGHT:** A GR7 of 1 Squadron launches from Invincible in the Gulf.

● **BELOW RIGHT:** Invincible and HMS Coventry refuel from RFA Fort Victoria at full speed.



## They're out of sight -

A WIDE range of support services and communications is available for families of those serving in the Gulf.

The importance of the links, particularly for Service people who have been away from home since the summer, is fully appreciated by the Navy.

For HMS Illustrious, there is the possibility of another lengthy spell away from home.

The carrier was flagship for last year's seven-month long global deployment Ocean Wave, and had been involved in Operation Bolton since January this year. Now she is unlikely to return home before this summer.

Her Commanding Officer, Capt Stephen Meyer, said that while the ship's company obviously found it hard to be separated for so long from their homes and families, they were highly motivated and very aware of the importance of what they were doing.

That feeling was echoed by Captain Burnell-Nugent, Commanding Officer of HMS Invincible,

who said: "The ship's company recognise that there is a task to be done out here and want their families to be proud of them over what is happening in defence terms."

"I would like to encourage families to keep writing. Mail is delivered every day by helicopter, and after one spell of three days at sea, 2.5 tonnes of mail arrived on board."

Cdr Tim Forster of Flag Officer Surface Flotilla (FOSF) agreed that there had been hiccups in keeping families informed, but that the system was working well now.

"During the ten day hiatus, after HMS Invincible left the Caribbean, it was impossible to keep families up to date as to what was going on because decisions had not been taken over what commitments there were going to be; there was nothing we could tell the families."

"We were acutely aware of the problem but there was nothing we could do about it."

"In the inevitable turbulence of positioning of ships for the present situation, there was a period of uncertainty until the programmes were refined. There was nothing to be able to say

## SAFAB HELPLINES

THE FOLLOWING helplines are operated by the Sailors and Families Advice Bureau (SAFAB) during office hours:

Northern Area - Helensburgh (01436) 672798. Out of working hours emergency no. - 01436 673452.

Eastern Area - Portsmouth (01705) 726518. Out of working hours emergency no. - 01705 726159.

Western Area - Plymouth (01752) 569696. Out of working hours emergency no. - 01752 555220.

because no one knew.

"If families rang in to the Sailors' and Families' Advice Bureau (SAFAB) lines they were being told the most up-to-date information we had."

However, once plans were made for Invincible to head for the Gulf, a system of links could be



# IRAQ



## OP BOLTON: BRITAIN'S MARITIME FORCES

BRITISH forces committed to Operation Bolton – the UK's codename for the military effort in the Gulf – are under the overall command of Lt General Sir Christopher Wallace, Commander of Joint Operations. He is centred at the Permanent Joint HQ at HMS Warrior, Northwood in Middlesex.

Commander of the UK Task Group is Rear Admiral Ian Forbes, flying his flag in HMS Invincible, but who will shortly transfer to HMS Illustrious.

Invincible's combined air group totalling 24 aircraft is composed of:

800 Naval Air Squadron equipped with seven Sea Harrier F45.

1 Squadron RAF with eight Harrier GR7, including one aircraft specially equipped to designate targets for laser guided bombing.

814 NAS operating Sea King Mk 5 and 6 anti-submarine helicopters.

849 NAS A Flight airborne early warning Sea Kings.

Escorts are the Type 22 frigate HMS Coventry and the Type 42 air defence destroyer HMS Nottingham. Both have Lynx helicopters.

All the surface vessels in the current task group are supported by the supply ship RFA Fort Victoria, which is temporary home to 814 NAS.

HMS Illustrious, which is due to relieve Invincible in early March, has the following combined air group:

801 NAS operating six Sea Harrier F45.

3 Squadron RAF with six Harrier GR7s (The ship's Harrier strength is likely to be augmented in the Gulf).

820 NAS with anti-submarine Sea Kings.

849 NAS B Flight operating airborne early warning Sea Kings.

Illustrious is accompanied by the supply ship RFA Fort George, and, as Navy News went to press, was being escorted by the Type 23 frigate HMS Somerset.

In addition, three Sandown-class minehunters of the Third Mine Countermeasures Squadron based at Faslane, left for the Gulf in January – on a deployment which had, coincidentally, been planned several months before.

The ships – HMS Bridport, HMS Inverness and HMS Sandown – are supported by the survey vessel HMS Herald acting as command ship, and the engineering maintenance vessel RFA Diligence.

The original purpose of sending the vessels was to demonstrate the potential of the ships to friendly navies contemplating orders, but their advanced minehunting abilities obviously enhance the capability of the task group.

Also in the region is the nuclear fleet submarine HMS Spartan, another deployment which had been planned some time before the present crisis began.

## - but not out of touch

created with some degree of certainty.

There are four main elements: mail, the Family Information Link Lines (FILLs), the Family Link Organisation (FLO) and telephone links.

There is a daily mail drop to all ships in the Gulf, operations permitting, and 'Blueys' have been authorised for ships on station.

"They can use the airmail forms free of charge as often as they like both ways, from personnel and from families, as a concession," said Cdr Forster. "We have received no complaints from deployed ships about mail."

He added that the mail system through the Gulf was well-established, and presented no problems in terms of speed of passage to or from ships.

FILL, featuring the latest information on a ship's progress, is available to all ships, submarines and squadrons, and these lines are updated whenever possible – again, operations permitting.

Run by a commercial company on behalf of the Navy, calls cost 50p a minute, but about half of that is channelled back into the amenity fund

which directly benefits ships' companies.

The FLO allows the CO of a ship to communicate directly with families by post, and is usually tested soon after a ship sails, giving details of FILL numbers and local area Naval Personal and Family Services (NPFS).

The CO will fax or dictate a letter to SAFAB, which is copied and posted first class to families to arrive the following morning, which is often the quickest and most efficient way of letting families know about changes of plans.

There is also a current concession allowing personnel to make regular, short personal calls – usually between ten and 15 minutes – free of charge using spare capacity on military satellites.

NPFS play a leading role in welfare support back home.

SAFAB – the Navy's Citizens' Advice Bureau – are part of the NPFS organisation, and as well as fulfilling a social service role, runs a network of community and family centres, usually on or near married quarters estates.

It organises social and recreational events

and some educational facilities.

Capt Dick Lake, Assistant Director of NPFS, said: "From time to time when a ship deploys the local area, NPFS sets up the opportunity for families to get together for an informal gathering."

"It's a chance for mutual support in a family centre, for people to get together and have a chat over coffee, normally supported by NPFS people."

He said the gatherings were held as often as the families felt they needed them, and NPFS staff tried to bring the latest information about the deployment to the gatherings, which he believed would be held roughly once a week in the areas most affected – Portsmouth and Plymouth.

One drawback to any information link is the general drift away from married quarters estates – with around 70 per cent of families now living in the general community in private accommodation. In those circumstances, spreading the word becomes more difficult, and the onus becomes greater on the families to 'plug themselves in' to the existing network.





# The unsinkable Violet Jessop

INEVITABLY, in the wake of the success of the film 'Titanic', publishers have been re-issuing the literature of the world's most notorious (although not the worst) maritime disaster.

One of the more remarkable is the memoir of stewardess Violet Jessop, **Titanic Survivor** (Sutton £8.99), who four years later while serving as a wartime nurse survived a second sinking, that of the hospital ship *Britannic* which struck a mine in the Aegean.

Her vivid description of this actually surpasses that of *Titanic*: "*Britannic* was still proceeding under her own steam. A few minutes after the lifeboat first touched the water, every man jack in the group of surrounding boats took a flying leap into the sea. They came thudding from behind and all around me, taking to the water like a vast army of rats.

"Not a word, not a shout was heard, just hundreds of men fleeing into the sea as if from an enemy in pursuit. It was extraordinary to find myself in the space of a few minutes almost the only occupant of the boat; I say almost, for one man, a doctor, was still standing in silence beside me. I turned round to see the reason for this exodus and, to my horror, saw *Britannic's* huge propellers churning and mincing up everything near them –

men, boats and everything were just one ghastly whirl...

"I just jumped overboard, leaving everything that was solid, not even wondering why I did so, going down and down... it was the first time in my life I had been under water.

"I felt myself rising and my head came into violent contact with something solid, something that prevented me from reaching the surface. Then again, there was another terrific crash above me and something very solid struck the back of my head a resounding blow, but happily on that part where my plentiful hair was thickest.

My brain shook like a solid body in a bottle of liquid. It was a very unpleasant feeling and at the third repetition I imagined the next time would be the last...

"Suddenly, joy of joys, I touched something – an arm – that moved as mine moved! My fingers gripped it like a vice, but only for a second, until my almost senseless head remembered what is said of the people drowning, that they

retain their hold after death, bringing death to another. With that cheering thought, I let go.

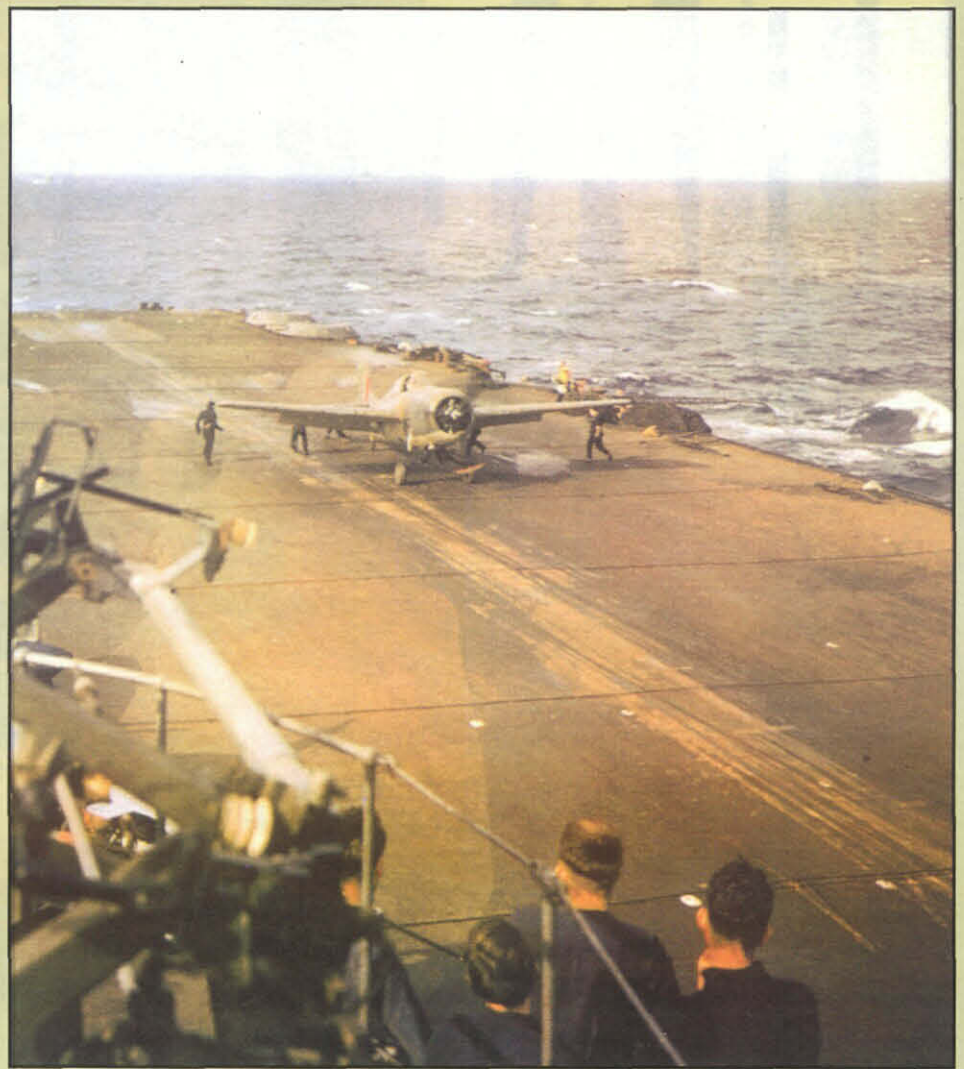
"Just as life seemed nothing but a whirling, choking ache, I rose to the light of day... I opened my eyes on an indescribable scene of slaughter, which made me shut them again to keep it out...

"The first thing my smarting eyes beheld was a head near me, a head split open, like a sheep's head served by the butcher, the poor brains trickling over on to the khaki shoulders..."

In fact only 28 lives were lost. Fortunately the *Britannic* was carrying no patients. The reason for the fatalities caused by her screws was that Capt Bartlett was trying desperately to drive his sinking ship into shallower waters, unaware of the carnage he was leaving in her wake.

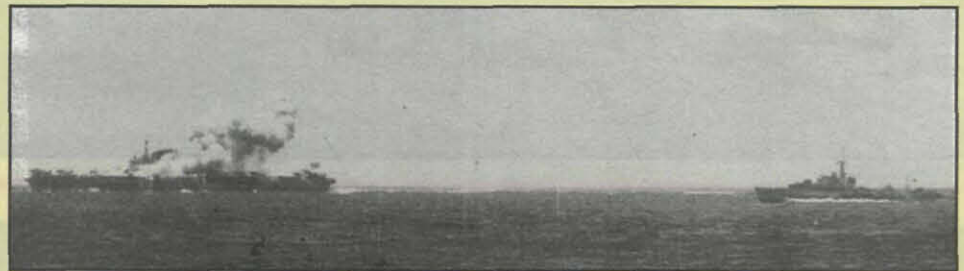
Violet Jessop survived the war – and a total of 42 years as a cabin stewardess. She died in 1971.

● **Titanic: A Survivor's Story** by Col Archibald Gracie, first published in 1913 and generally regarded as the most accurate contemporary account, is also re-issued by Sutton at £8.99.



## Carriers in combat

THE GRUMMAN Wildcat was known to the Royal Navy as the Martlet, until aircraft designations were standardised. Here, in a rare wartime colour photograph, a Wildcat gets ready to take off from HMS Formidable during Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa. Below: May 4, 1945 – the sequence of a Kamikaze attack on the Formidable, with the aircraft about to strike, exploding on impact, the ship damaged and on fire, and then covered in smoke. But she survived! – From *Carrier Combat* (Sutton Publishing, £25) by David Wragg.



## life saving equipment



It's the event of the canoeing calendar: the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe and Kayak Race on April 10th – 13th.

Help to save lives by taking part and supporting the race's charity of the year – Cancer Research Campaign.

For our sponsorship pack, please return this form to: Events Office, Cancer Research Campaign, 137b Putney High Street, London SW15 1SU. Or call 0181 789 1192. If you can't take part this year, reserve a place for next.

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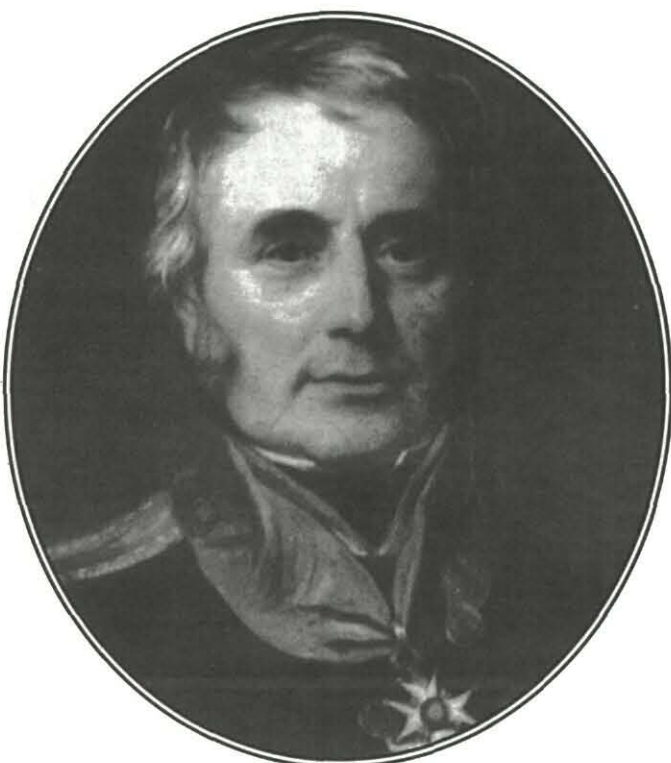


Making cancer history



# At Your Leisure

## The Admiral Behind Hornblower



● Model for Hornblower – Admiral Sir James Gordon even looked like Gregory Peck . . .

### ScreenScene

A COUPLE of days after the sinking of the Titanic in 1912, Thomas Hardy wrote his poem *The Convergence of the Twain*, in which he pictured two separate events, the slow evolving of an iceberg and the frenzied construction of the great liner – “Till the Spinner of the Years/Said ‘Now!’ And each one hears/And the consummation jars two hemispheres”.

At the same time, the schoolboy George Orwell shivered under his bedclothes, as he would recall later, fantasising about being lifted high above the Atlantic as the Titanic upended, and then plunged down into its depths: fear of heights and fear of depths within the same dreadful occasion.

Now, almost at the end of the century, the events of that April night have scarcely loosened their grip on the imagination, even though the wreck itself, discovered in 1985, receives so many visitors that Macdonalds must be considering opening their first underwater franchise down there.

The new movie version of the sinking – called *Titanic*, of course – is not only the most lavish rendering but allegedly the most

expensive movie ever, a record which admittedly seems to be broken on an annual basis.

The sets of the ship's interior indicate where a lot of the money went, notably the great staircase with its glass dome covering, so familiar to aficionados of the wreck, and the engine and boiler rooms, vast smoky caverns crowded with heaving pistons and golden, glowing furnaces.

Shots of the Titanic at sea are less successful, belonging to that twilight zone in which animation seems to be trying, without complete success, to turn itself into live action – the province, in other words, of the digital compositor. And it's perhaps regrettable that the film makers didn't follow Thomas Hardy's lead and make a little more of the iceberg, rather than relegating it to a barely-glimpsed bit part.

But it is in its depiction of the last few minutes before the sinking, of what happened as the ship began to break up, that the film truly comes into its own. This is

**F**ANS of C.S.Forester's hero Horatio Hornblower have long speculated as to whether his adventures were based on the career of a real naval officer.

Most have decided that he was, after all, a composite character – but now Bryan Perrett claims to have solved the mystery with some persuasive evidence that points to the little known but highly distinguished Admiral of the Fleet Sir James Gordon as the original.

Certainly Gordon fits the bill. He joined the RN as a boy of 11, lived long and rose to the highest rank in his profession. For Forester to be able to extract the maximum possible benefit from his successful formula it was obviously necessary to embrace a service lifespan which began with a boy at the start of the wars with Revolutionary France and ended with an elderly and revered figure of great seniority who had survived into an era in which the Navy's wooden walls were beginning to give way to armour plate, and sails to steam.

Gordon took part in major sea battles (the Nile and Lissa), frigate actions, single ship duels, cutting-out expeditions and operations far behind enemy lines. Did all the things Hornblower did, in fact.

He was the last Governor of the Royal Naval Hospital at Greenwich and when he died – having served more than 75 years! – his Naval General Service Medal carried seven bars.

But some of the other points of contact between them, even at the most superficial level, add up to something that can hardly be argued as coincidence. As Perrett notes:

- Both came from backgrounds that were respectable but not especially affluent.
- Both joined the Navy as boys in 1793
- Both spent their early service aboard ships of the line and much of their subsequent careers in smaller vessels.
- Both, because of their efficiency, rose rapidly in the service, being promoted Lieutenant in 1800, Master and Commander in 1804 and Captain approximately three years later.

## It could have been even better remembered . . .

spectacle of the highest order, of a quality and intensity that one rarely sees on the screen; a special mention should go to the artists in the sound department for their imagining of the terrifying noises that would be the accompaniment to such a cataclysm.

Opinions will differ as to the level of interest and appropriateness of the melodramatic plot which has been grafted on to the real life tragedy. This is the affair of the missing diamond, the question of whether Kate Winslett will succeed in breaking off her engagement to a wealthy cad, and other situations and characters familiar from the world of the made-for-television movie.

Many will have seen the frequently revived 1958 British account of the disaster, *A Night To Remember*, which dispensed with any fictional framework but provided a brisk, engrossing series of vignettes, mostly vouched for by survivors. One can imagine a really terrific film which combined the approach of the 1958 version with the financial and technical resources of the new one. Cast list watchers will note that one Vern Ulrich has the part of ‘Man in Water’. Fans of poor old Vern, if any, will certainly bemoan his involvement in the most hilariously imprecise credit in movie history.

– Bob Baker.

## Rev Mike spots us in the new Bond



LAST month we offered a small prize to the first person to spot the scenes in which *Navy News* features in the new James Bond film *Tomorrow Never Dies*.

The Rev Mike Brotherton, Chaplain to the Fourth Frigate Squadron (who has seen it twice) correctly identified the newspaper of the Royal Navy making two (uncredited) appearances in the Junior Rates dining hall on board HMS Westminster (doubling as ‘HMS Devonshire’).

These occur during the Chinese air attack and once again as the monster drill cuts through the side of the ship and she begins to sink.

Mike receives £20 with the proviso that he doesn't spend it all on vodka martinis and Bond girls.

● Above: a tense moment in the Ops Room of ‘HMS Devonshire’, one of the RN ships featuring in *Tomorrow Never Dies*.



● Lydia Ward at the time of her marriage to Gordon. The portrait bears a striking resemblance to that of the fictional Lady Barbara Wellesley, itself based on Forester's description, contained in C.Northcote Parkinson's *Life and Times of Horatio Hornblower*. The Lydia was Hornblower's ship in *The Happy Return*.

● Both remained in the much-reduced post-war Navy and obtained sea commands.

● Both attained the rank of Admiral of the Fleet.

Gordon even looked a bit like Gregory Peck, who memorably played the title role in the 1950 film *Captain Hornblower*.

The mystery – although it obviously suited Forester well – remains as to why he has remained a hero so “deep in shadow”, which provides another fascinating strand to this long overdue biography of an officer whose exploits were transferred to the most famous fictional naval hero of all.

In concluding *The Real Hornblower* (Arms & Armour £16.99) Perrett argues that Pellew (later Lord Exmouth), ‘Black Charlie’ Napier and other better known contemporaries all saw active service after the close of the Napoleonic Wars while Gordon did not, and so their names remained before the public.

**T**he fact that his death coincided with the final closure of the Hospital may have been another factor. His daughters later published his papers – but only for private circulation.

Forester would have discovered these in the libraries of the British Museum or the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, though. Complementing the text and to further fire his imagination, there were a number of plates of various actions, of Gordon at various stages of his career and of his wife Lydia.

“With the professional writer's instinct for financial survival, Forester would have recognised that, if the public liked Horatio Hornblower, here lay an ample source for further plots; and that, lest others exploit the idea, it would be necessary further to conceal the already half-hidden entrance to the gold mine.

“So it became part of Gordon's legacy that, while largely forgotten himself, he should contribute so much to the fictional Hornblower's life. Furthermore, Forester's hero was to inspire such authors as Alexander Kent, Patrick O'Brien and Dudley Pope to produce superb sea stories of the Napoleonic era.

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## Reunions

### APRIL

**HMS Cornwall (1939-42)** Association reunion will be at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth, on April 3-5. Further details from John Fuller, 109, Margaret Rd, New Barnet, Herts EN4 9RA, tel 0181 449 0590.

**RNAS (East Anglia)** reunion will be at the Shipwreck, Shotley Marina (ex-HMS Ganges, Enright Block) on April 5. Contact Peter Brooke at 7, Penn Close, Chapel St Mary, Ipswich IP9 2UE, tel 01473 310189.

**HMS Dorsetshire** Association anniversary reunion will be at the Royal Fleet Club, Devonport, on April 9-11. Details from Bert Gollop, 3, Colthill Close, Ernesettle, Plymouth PL5 2PA, tel 01752 360478.

**Gib reunion 1990-93** on April 11 at the Victory Club, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. More information on 01705 358361 or 358019.

**HMS Ruler and 885 Squadron FAA** reunion will be in Bristol on April 17-21. Details from John Robson, on 01232 796538 or Ted Restall on 0117 932 7074.

**HMS Beverley 1940-43:** A memorial service is to be held at Beverley minster at 11.30 to coincide with the launch of a book by Geoff Blewett about the ship. For details, contact Geoff at 47, Norwood, Beverley, East Yorks HU17 9HN, tel 01482 862852.

**HMS Sefton LS1** Far East 1944-46 reunion will be in Birmingham on April 25. Contact Alan Golden on 01746 712630.

**HMS Hood** reunion dinner will be on April 25 at the Home Club, Portsmouth; church parade the next day. Boldre church service on May 24. Tickets for the reunion from Mr K. Clark, 57, Berweeke Ave, Winchester, Hants, tel 01962 883159.

**HMS Serene 1944-46** reunion will be on April 25 at the Community Centre, Lingfield, Surrey. Contact E. Drummond at 5, Green Way, Scarcroft, Leeds LS14 3BJ, tel 01113 289 2222.

**Sherborne RMA Hospital** reunion will be at the Crown Inn, Greenhill, Sherborne on April 25 at 12.30 for 1pm. For tickets (£10) and details send an SAE to Mrs Doris Schofield (nee Miller), The Bungalow, Augustus Rd, Hockliffe, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 9NF, tel 01525 210867.

**D.E.M.S. Association** Southern will be holding a reunion at the RMA, Hanworth Park Rd, Middlesex (near Heathrow) on April 25. Details from Charles Collis, 2, Neil Close, Ashford, Middx TW15 1NT.

**HMS Eaglet** will be holding a reunion for April 25 for anyone who served in its capacity at HMS Eaglet. Details from P. Hedgecock at "Ramillies", 14, Park St, Bootle, Merseyside L20 3DG, tel 0151 286 5966.

### MAY

**HMS Gambia Association** will hold a mini-reunion in Portsmouth during the weekend of May 1-3. Details from Les Newman at 3, Coppice Rd, Whitnash, Leamington Spa CV31 2JE, tel 01926 831599.

**Js and Ks and 14th Destroyer Flotilla** Association will hold a reunion on May 2. Please contact W. Skilling, 7, The Hollands, Park Rd, Hanworth, Middx TW13 6PQ, tel 0181 898 6857.

**429 Kings Squad RM** reunion will be at the Grange Moor Hotel, Maidstone, Kent on May 8-9. Enquiries to Mr D. Burnham, Alaskan Lodge, Front Rd, Murrow, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 4JQ, tel 01945 700703.

**HMS Comus Comrades Association** meeting in York on May 8-9. Contact Geoff Harper on 01302 708135.

**Super "T" Class Club** reunion is at the Nautical Club, Birmingham, on May 23 at 12.30. Details from Doug Shepherd on 01670 677812, mobile 0831 568242, 38, Christies Lane, Montrose, Angus, Scotland DD10 8HY.

**Antelope** reunion will take place at the Royal British Legion Club, Hereford, on May 23. Further details from Bob Hutton, 3, Agars Plough, Eton, Windsor SL4 6HR.

**HMS Lookout G32** reunion at Burnley on May 23. Details from Buck Taylor at 24, Grove Rd, Uppermill, Oldham OL3 6JR.

### JUNE

**523 and 524 Squads RM** 50th anniversary reunion in June. Details from George Chandler on 01705 412895 or Don Pimp at 92, Pound Rd, East Peckham, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 5BJ, tel 01622 871573.

**HMS Pique** (fleet sweeper 1943-47) reunion is at Portsmouth in June. Details from Gus Gagg, 22, St Augustine's Court, Mornington Rd, Leytonstone, London E11 3BQ, tel 0181 556 0367.

**HMS Tattoo 1943-46** (40th MSF) reunion at Portsmouth in June. Contact Arthur (Joe) Rue at 30, East Drive, Blunsdon Abbey, Swindon, Wilts SN2 4DP, tel 01793 724490.

**HMS Unicorn Association** is looking for ex-shipmates from 1949-51 and 1951-54 commissions for a reunion on June 1-5. Telephone 01442 255821 for details.

**HMS Hunter Association** reunion will be on June 3 at the Home Club, Portsmouth. All ranks ship's company or squadron and their wives, family or partners welcome. Details from J. Preece, 1,

Melrose Drive, Cannock, Staffs WS12 4LU, tel 01543 422759.

**Submarine Coxswains Association** reunion weekend starts on June 5 – the last to be held at HMS Dolphin. For further details ring S. Hayden on 01329 315913.

**HMS Dainty Association** seeks shipmates of all commissions for a reunion in York on June 5-7. A full programme includes civic reception and dedication of Standard at York Minster. Details from Peter Hillman at 15, East Mead, Pagham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 4QT, tel 01243 265901.

**Tribal Class destroyers and frigates, 10th destroyer flotilla/Black Prince and Bellona** reunion at Lytham St Annes on June 5-8. Send SAE for further information to John Bull, 4, Pearl Close, East Ham, London E6 4QY, tel 0171 511 9216.

**HMS Bicester (L34 and M36)** reunion will be at the Littlebury Hotel, Church End, Bicester, on June 6. Details from Dave Braybrook, 30, Trinity Grove, Hertford SG14 3HB, tel 01992 583272.

**ETS** reunion: serving and ex ETS Wrens are invited to close of branch party on June 6 at HMS Nelson. Details: Zoe Troulan (nee Gamble), 6, Pines Rd, Exmouth, Devon EX8 5NJ, tel 01395 288071.

**HMS Verulam** reunion is on June 6 at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Contact Chris Williams at 1, Brooklands, Tiptree, Essex, tel 01621 816207.

**HMS Brissenden L79 Association** will hold their sixth reunion on June 6 at the RMA Club, Lower Bridge St, Chester. Details from C. Lawrence at 31, The Limes, Blethley, Milton Keynes MK2 2JN, tel 01908 647665, or N. Folkard on 01945 589352.

**888 (PR) Naval Air Squadron** Ceylon and East Indies Fleet 1944-45 reunion is planned for June 8-10 at Upton-upon-Severn, Worcs. Details from Maurice Smith, 28, Ashwood Drive, Humberston, Grimsby DN36 4TX, tel 01472 816440.

**LCG & F** reunion is to be held at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Queen St, Portsmouth on June 9-11. For details send an SAE to Maurice Allen at 8, Leys Rd, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 1PN, tel 01933 279401.

**HMS Liverpool Association** reunion on June 13 at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. Members of any ship's company, any commission, any rank or rating are invited. Details from John Waters, 2, Dewberry Rd, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 5XJ.

**HMS Kipling (G91)** reunion is on June 13 at the Ashburn Hotel, Fordingbridge. Contact N. Roake at 33, Wickens Meadow,

Rye Lane, Dunton Green, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5JB, tel 01959 524586.

**LCI (S)** crew members, their wives and ex-Wrens boat crews are invited to an informal reunion lunch at the Rising Sun, Warsash on June 14. Contact Rhona Moody on 01489 575494 or Fred Baker on 01279 438538 as soon as possible.

**HMS Slinger 1943-46** annual reunion will be held at the Stafford Hotel, City Rd, Chester on June 16. Details from Allan Kellett at 31, Manscombe Rd, Allerton, Bradford BD15 7AQ, tel 01274 487495.

**HMS Brecon 1942-45** reunion is on June 19-21 at the Strathallan Hotel and Nautical Club in Birmingham. Details from Doug Stevens at 29, Horsellers, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 9UH, tel 01442 251839.

**HMS Newcastle 1947-49** reunion at the Royal Fleet Club, Devonport, June 20; service at St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, on June 21. Details from Les Smith at 26, St Oswald's Park, Dunham on Trent, Newark, Notts NG22 0UB, tel 01777 228688.

### JULY

**HMS Tilford, Ickford, Camberford, Greatford 1965-66:** Anyone interested in a reunion in July should contact Poncho Brett at 14, Marquis Gardens, Barnby Dun, Doncaster DN3 1DX, tel 01302 883331.

**D Boats Association** will be held at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth on July 4-5. Details from Ted Horner at 50a, Woodside, Gosport PO13 0YT, tel 01329 220028.

**HMS Mermaid** reunion: all from 1944-54 are welcome at the Senior Rates mess, HMS Dolphin on July 11. Details from J. Anderson, 25, Springwood Rd, Scawthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorks DN5 9HT, tel 01302 784946.

**HMS Glasgow Old Boys Association** reunion in Portsmouth on July 11-12. Details from Allan Mercer, 89, Royal Ave, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 8RJ, tel 0151 510 2445.

**King George's Fund for Sailors** invites all standard bearers, service and ex-service personnel and friends to Bridlington on July 17-19 with the Band of the Royal Marines. Contact Ted Harland on 01262 606797.

**RN Commando Association** annual reunion and AGM is at the Nautical Club, Birmingham, on July 18-19. Details from R.J. Lawrence, 18, Crane Drive, Verwood, Dorset BH31 6QB, tel 01202 825880.

### AUGUST

**Fisgard apprentices, August 1944 entry, Anson Division:** A reunion will be held on August 6 at the Royal Fleet Club, Devonport, to reminisce on the passing-out in August 1948. Ring Syd Wakeham on 01752 402830 or Terry Liming on 01489 896998.

**HMS Eagle survivors 1942** reunion will be held at the Home Club, Portsmouth, on August 15. Details from A. Goodenough, 3, Brompton Rd, Reading RG30 3HY, tel 0118 957 3783, sending an SAE.

**HMS Argonaut Association** reunion will be at the Victory Club, HMS Nelson, on August 22. Still looking for old shipmates from 1942-46 commissions. Contact V. Triggs on 01784 257479.

**HMS Pheasant 1943-46** reunion is on August 28-31 at Lakeside, Hayling Island. Details from B. Dowling, 1, Dymchurch Close, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex IG5 0LB, tel 0181 924 9158.

injured. William was in the boys' rope-climbing team in Olympia, May 1937 – were you? Write to him at 135, Rivershyre Circle, Lawrenceville, Ga 30043, USA.

**Lt Jack Thornburn:** An old friend is hoping to trace Jack after 48 years. If anyone knows of his whereabouts, please contact 01553 672520.

**HM ships Glorious, Ardent and Acasta:** Would anyone who served on these ships, sunk on June 8, 1940, off Norway please forward photos of ships and written stories of their service on these warships prior to the sinkings, and any newspaper articles on the Glorious disaster. If you have any information, ring Bernard Howard on 01780 766444.

**HMS Pheasant:** The HMS Pheasant Association 1943-46 is seeking old shipmates of all ranks – trying to find messmates Fred Hatt, Jasper Turner, brothers Phil and Doug Merritt, Shorty Townsend, George Rolph, Cecil Cortgroves, Denis Brittan. Contact Bernie Dowling at 1, Dymchurch Close, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex IG5 0LB, tel 0181 924 9158.

**Jimmy 'Jock' McCambridge:** Mr R. Barton wants to trace Jock, who he thinks came from Paisley. They were attached to Landing Craft Flotilla 410 at Canvey Island, Essex, in 1944. Contact Mr Barton at 19, Beech Rd, Hadleigh, Benfleet, Essex SS7 2AZ, tel 01702 554309.

**HMS Ganges 1949 Classes 213-214:** A 50-year get-together is being planned for all class members, who were at HMS Ganges from January until December 1949. For details contact Terry Cooper at 28, Hopgrove Lane South, Malton Rd, York YO3 9TG, tel 01904 425883.

**Class S7, HMS Royal Arthur 1942:** For meeting details of above class, which ran from March until August, contact R. Baker at 14, Saumarez St, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 2PT, or tel 01481 720058.

**Kenneth Trafford:** Striker Lyte wants to trace a fellow steward with whom he served in HM ships Hermes, Ganges, Blackpool and Caprice between 1962 and 1967. Striker lives at 14, The Fairway, Gosport PO13 0EU, tel 01329 513793.

**HMS Gallant:** Mr Edwards was a stoker in HMS Gallant when she struck a mine in 1941, and wants to know if there are any shipmates still about. Survivors are asked to contact Mr Edwards at 180, Boyce Rd, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex SS17 8RL.

**Stanley Watts:** Leading Stoker Stanley, known as Dodo, was in the Navy between 1938 and 1944 – does anyone remember serving with him? If so, please contact him at Shire House, Sidmouth Rd, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3ES, tel 01297 443450.

**HMS Collingwood:** A new association has been formed – all ranks welcome, whether training or ship's company. Reunions, visits, newsletter etc planned. Send A5 SAE or a couple of stamps for full details to Membership Secretary, HMS Collingwood Association, 7, Heath Rd, Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 8PG.

**John Skinner:** Mr Tilley is hoping to trace old friend John Skinner; they both joined the Navy in 1939. He served in HMS Effingham with two cousins, and was due to join HMS Hood but was delayed by an air raid. Contact Mr Tilley at 54, Spital Crescent, Newbiggin-by-Sea, Northumberland NE64 6SU.

**845 Whirlwind Helicopter Squadron:** Did you serve with them between October 1955 and April 1957? If so, are you interested in a reunion? Contact Ken Parker at 13, Rippledale, Portishead, North Somerset BS20 6ND, tel 01275 844225.

**Devonport Heavy Ls:** It is 30 years since the changing of the Electrical Branch, and Peter 'Brum' Gosling is hoping to hold a reunion for the High Power Electricians, known as Heavy Ls, in Plymouth this year. Anyone interested who served in the OE and later ME(L) branches should contact Peter on 01752 344639 or at 65, Kenmare Drive, Plympton, Plymouth PL7 2VJ.



## Over to You

**Victor Clements:** Victor's widow Kathy would like to hear from former shipmates of Victor, who died in January. He served on HMS Queen during World War II and with 853 Squadron on HMS Tracker, and had colleagues in both London and Manchester, but Kathy has not got their addresses. Contact her at 42, Burton Old Rd, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 6EG, tel 01543 252776.

**HMS Garland:** A caller contacted G. Massey in response to an appeal over HMS Garland in the last issue of *Navy News*, but the caller's message and phone number was deleted accidentally on voice mail – G. Massey is very keen that the person should get in contact again. His address is 7, Redwood Drive, Great Sutton, South Wirral L66 2YA, tel 0151 200 1886.

**Lt Cdr Geoffrey Dorrer RNR:** Ian Wilson is hoping to contact Lt Cdr Dorrer, who contributed to a 1971 book on trawlers at war. Mr Wilson is researching a book on shipping losses off the north-west coast of Ireland, and Lt Cdr Dorrer was present at the rescue of survivors of the liner Empress of Britain. Contact Mr Wilson at 20, Windmill Rd, Bangor, Co Down BT20 5RA.

**HM ships Cleopatra and Euryalus:** Alan Raven wants to make contact with wartime officers and men of the cruisers Cleopatra and Euryalus. All letters will be replied to. Contact Mr Raven at 35, Arthur Ave, Lynbrook, NY 11563, USA.

**War-weary ships:** Syd Garvey was an engine room artificer from January 1943 to 1957, and is writing a book on the changeover from wartime Navy to peacetime, and life in the engine rooms of war-weary ships. Any humorous ditties would be welcomed for possible inclusion – particularly the script of a sops' opera at the late Invergordon Canteen which portrays a Gunner Instructor who leaves the service to become a verger. Contact Mr Garvey at 26, Murray Rd, Wokingham, Berks RG41 2TB, tel 01189 781528.

**Brian "Knocker" White:** Alby White is trying to trace information or pictures of his late father Bryan, born September 13, 1927, who served on a number of ships including HMS Ocean, Ajax, Illustrious, Duchess, Victorious and Comus (including Christmas Day 1948 in Hong Kong on the Comus). Any information gratefully received on 01773 520884, or at 27, Tibbs Rd, Westhouses, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 5AA.

**HMCS Weyburn/HMS Wyvern:** Is there anyone who was present when the Canadian corvette was attacked on February 22, 1943, hours out of Gibraltar in a UK-bound convoy? HMS Wyvern broke away to help, and was damaged when the Canadian ship blew up and sank. Other ships involved included HMS Black Swan and the Gibraltar tug Destiny. Morley Haynes was a survivor from the Weyburn, and would like to hear from anyone from the Wyvern, or any other naval veterans interested. Contact him at 1, Jennifer Gardens, London, Ontario, Canada N5X 3L2.

**HMS Daring:** Owen Simpson is researching HMS Daring's sinking by U23 on February 18, 1940; only five survivors were picked up by HMS Ilex and submarine HMS Thistle. Any information to Mr Simpson, Secretary, HMS Daring Association 1952-54, 20, Green Close, Uley, Glos GL11 5TH, tel 01453 860564.

**Michael Sturman:** Ian Wakefield is organising a school football team reunion,

and the one missing member is Michael Sturman, born 1947, last known of living in Solihull until 1992 or 1993, who went to school at Ruskington Secondary Modern near Sleaford, Lincs, and joined the Navy in 1962 or 63, possibly serving in HMS Cambrian between 1966-69. Any information to Ian at Aloha, 1, Chestnut Close, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 5ET.

**Ton class minesweepers and mine-hunters:** J. Smith is researching a history of the Ton class and needs photographs – any ship, any time frame, any navy, above or below deck. RNV/RNR ships would be particularly welcomed, and most of all a shot of the original Mirlees engine. If anyone can help, write to 11b, Linley Grove, King's Heath, Birmingham B14 6HP, tel 0121 444 0440.

**HMS Devonshire:** Would any shipmates who served on HMS Devonshire from June 6-10 1940 who were involved in receiving of radio signals contact Bernard Howard of Kettton and District RNA on 01780 766444 (daytime) or 01780 470446 all other times.

**Enigma book:** The author of a new book about Enigma wants to interview officers or ratings on the following ships at the following dates in respect of the capture of German ships or U-boats: HMS Gleaner (minesweeper), Feb 1940, capture of U-33; Weston (sloop), May 1940, capture of U13; Marsdale (boarding vessel), June 1941, capture of Gedania; Ashanti (destroyer), December 1941, capture of Geier; Paladin (destroyer), February 1943, capture of U-205; and on the following ships in respect of their capture or sinking by German ships: Malvernian (boarding vessel), July 1941; City of Baghdad (Ellerman Line), July 1940, capture by Atlantis; Benarty, September 1940, capture by Atlantis; Automodon, November 1940, capture by Atlantis. Any information to Hugh Seabag-Montefiore on 0171 267 5533 or 0171 284 0016.

**HMS Griffin Association** seeks a copy of Destroyers at War, author Haines. Contact Stan Deighton at 21, Hardwick Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4LH, tel 0118 942 9297.

**Lt Cdr Colin Hewitt:** If anyone knows of Lt Cdr Hewitt's whereabouts, could they ask him to contact G. Cooke at PO Box 318, Onrust River, 7201, South Africa, Urgently.

## Memories of Malaya

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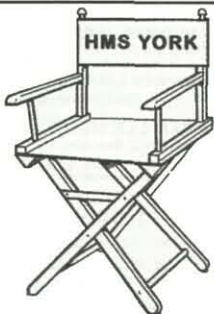
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## AIRCRAFT OF THE ROYAL NAVY No 18

Scimitar of 803 Naval Air Squadron in HMS Victorious during bridge-catching trials in the early 1960s.



## Supermarine Scimitar

THE SUPERMARINE Scimitar represented a true leap forward in technology and power for the Fleet Air Arm.

Almost 200mph faster than the Hawker Sea Hawk it replaced as a multi-purpose, carrier-borne fighter, the Scimitar was the first Naval aircraft capable of supersonic flight (in a shallow dive), the FAA's first swept-wing aircraft, and the first to carry nuclear weapons – in a low-level, tactical role.

It was also the first operational Naval aircraft to be equipped with blown flaps – operated by high-pressure air fed to the top surfaces of the wing – which had the effect of reducing approach and launch speeds.

However, the Scimitar was Britain's last Naval fighter to lack fire-control radar, a sophisticated navigation system, and an observer.

The first operational Scimitar flew in early 1957, the first operational aircraft reaching 803 Naval Air Squadron at RN air station Lossiemouth by June the next year.

A total of 76 Scimitars were built and equipped three other operational squadrons – 800, 804 and 807; and, at varying times, three training squadrons – 700, 736, and 764. The last operational Scimitars flew with 803 NAS in October 1966, being replaced by Buccaneer

strike aircraft. However, the type remained in service into the early 1970s with the civilian-manned Fleet Requirements Unit at Hurn Airport, Bournemouth.

Scimitars were arguably the most aesthetically pleasing of all the Navy's aircraft and were popular with their pilots – but not their maintainers, as they tended to leak fuel on to the flight deck.





# Royal Naval Association



## Publicity man to lead the way 'NEW BLOOD' CAMPAIGN AIMING TO REACH 400,000

**PUBLICITY EXPERT** David Dennis has been appointed by the RNA to lead a public relations drive designed to reach an estimated 400,000 potential recruits to the Association.

With the full title of National Publicity and Recruitment Officer – an honorary post – Lt Cdr Dennis RNR, has drawn up a PR plan with no fewer than 60 recommendations. It has been accepted in its entirety by the Association's National Council.

More important, perhaps, the Council has also agreed to provide the funds to turn the scheme into action. The move reflects the message from Association President, Vice Admiral Sir Roy Newman, given at last year's annual conference, that the RNA needed "new blood and new ideas" to ensure its future.

Shipmate Dennis, president of No.11 Area, told *Navy News*: "The plan shows how we can go about our future publicity in a professional manner, and by putting the opportunities and necessary action with target dates into one document, our sights will be much clearer."

"The RNA is a wonderful organ-

isation. If it hadn't a lot to offer, we wouldn't be in the current enviable position of having 40,000 members.

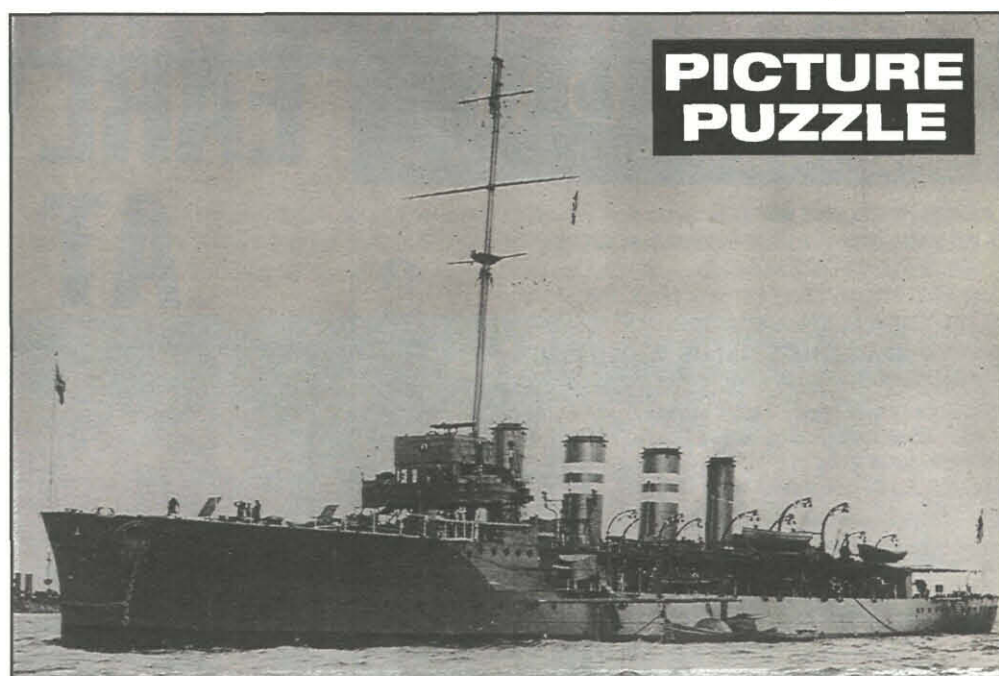
"I firmly believe that the term 'once Navy, always Navy' will always be true, and one of our main publicity themes will be to reach the estimated 400,000 serving and ex-Navy people to let them know of our branch network and the benefits of belonging to the RNA."

He said that while the Association was proud and delighted to have veterans as members, the RNA needed to emphasise its welfare system and the consider-

able charitable work at national and branch level – including membership of war pensions committees nationwide.

"I want our publicity material to major on these types of Association involvements where we can, by our efforts, make a difference to the lives of Naval individuals and families when they are in need of friendly help."

The PR plan, which is being circulated to every branch, includes the setting up of a branch and Area PRO network under the guidance and training of the National Publicity Officer.



### PICTURE PUZZLE

**WINNER** of our Puzzle Picture competition in the January issue was Mr A. W. Gardner of Bradford.

He correctly named the mystery vessel as the submarine depot ship HMS Forth (1938-85).

His reply was chosen at random, and he receives our cash prize of £30. A further prize of £30 is offered for the name of the ship pictured here, and her rather unhappy distinction.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.

Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a single winner. Closing date for entries is April 15. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. The winner will be announced in our May edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

#### MYSTERY PICTURE 37

Name .....

Address .....

My answer .....



● Shipmate David Dennis – his 60-point PR plan has been given the go-ahead.

## Around the Branches

### Shrewsbury

It's been full ahead for the branch since the commissioning of their new HQ, the social season beginning with a St Valentine's dance.

At the annual general meeting, attended by 40 members, the following shipmates were elected officers: president, Lt Cdr Baz Winwood; vice president, Charlie Hatton; chairman, Harry Turner; vice chairman, John Turner; treasurer, Terry HARRY; secretary, Graham Cook.

### Newport

Shipmate Kevin Close got on his bike and rode from John o' Groats to Land's End for charity. The 868-mile journey – plus ten miles due to a navigation error – was made in atrocious weather and raised £2,200 to be divided between the RNLI and the McMillan Nurses

appeal. Kevin contributed £490 of the total himself.

### Herne Bay

A certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Royal British Legion was presented to former branch secretary, Shipmate George Goodman, for ten years service as parade marshal. George was unable to continue as secretary due to ill health.

### Royal Leamington Spa

The branch will mark its 50th anniversary on Sunday, April 19 with a parade and service in All Saints parish church where the branch standard will be rededicated. The salute will be taken by the General Secretary, Capt Bob McQueen RN (ret'd).

Those wishing to attend should contact the branch secretary, Shipmate W. J. Freeman, on 01926 881391.

### Wigston & District

Members spent a weekend as guests of the senior rates mess, HMS Heron. Two shipmates, Sid Elliott and Dave Barker, between them had collected more than £1,500 for the Poppy Appeal.

### Trafford

Shipmates Charles Hutton and Ken Melville of Trafford branch have been awarded life membership by No. 10 Area.

Charles, a retired Principal Prison Officer who worked at Strangeways, is Area secretary and secretary of Trafford branch. Ken, who worked for BBC TV in Manchester, is a member of the Area committee and is a former chairman of Trafford.

### Ipswich

Over 100 members and guests attended the branch's annual din-

ner, and were welcomed by the chairman, Shipmate Keith Roshel. Guests of honour were the president of No. 5 Area, Shipmate M. A. (Shiner) Wright, and Mrs Wright; branch president, Capt Murray Walker RN (ret'd) – CO of HMS Ganges at its closure in 1973 – and Mrs Walker.

### Shard End

Shipmates eagerly await a response from other branches – home or away – to take part in a friendly game of uckers. If Shard End's reputation is frightening, and they are practising regularly to get even better – if that is possible! – it should not deter other teams from challenging them before the gala No. 8 Area Uckers Championship. Anyone keen to take on Shard End should contact Shipmate R. E. Bolter on 0121 783 7486.

### Cambridge

The standards of Cambridge RNA and RMA branches will be dedicated together at Churchill College on April 4, beginning at 1400.

The ceremony will be followed by a concert of light music and light entertainment from 2000 to 2200 (tea and dinner by prior arrangement).

### Hanworth

The branch's programme for this year includes monthly section meetings, dancing to live music each Saturday night, and bingo and dancing on Sunday evenings. Shipmates old and new are welcome.

Hanworth's reinstated Christmas draw raised a creditable £620 for charity.

### In Brief

**THE NATIONAL standard bearers competition will be held this year in Blackpool – at Norbreck Castle Hotel beginning at 1400 on April 25.**

**A TRAFALGAR dinner** sponsored by Earl Nelson will be hosted by the House of Lords on October 15 at a cost of £40-£50 per head. Contact HQ.

**THE RNA Conference will be held at Bridlington on June 27.**

**NAVY Days at Portsmouth** on August 28-31 will coincide with the International Festival of the Sea being held there. Also this summer, the Royal Tournament will run from July 21 to August 2.

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## Norman's ties with Endeavour



**THIS DISPLAY** of knots by Keighley branch member, Shipmate Norman Kelk, is now on display in HM Bark Endeavour, the full-size replica of Capt Cook's ship.

Norman is pictured here presenting the knots board to the Endeavour's master, Chris Blake, in the ship's great cabin during the bark's visit to Hull.

Endeavour is now touring the USA before returning to Fremantle, Western Australia, the home of the Endeavour Foundation and Museum where she was built.

The museum also has on display an intricate bell rope, crafted by Norman after he served as a volunteer guide on board the ship last year at Whitby.

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E Mail: Ken@kjbolpz.demon.co.uk

The Bolitho School is a registered Charity providing education for boys and girls

# EARLY START IN FRENCH AT BOLITHO SCHOOL



● Spreading the bilingual word at Bolitho School are pupils Alexander Pipkin (nine) and Laura Caddick (12).

**B**OLITHO School, Penzance has opened a bilingual section in English and French. Between the ages of eight and 13, pupils can opt in to the bilingual section. Since there are beginner, intermediate and advanced sets, children of any level in French, from complete beginners onwards, may participate - subject to their

Pupils in the bilingual section receive 60 per cent of their lessons in English, with the rest of the children in their year group. During these lessons, they are taught the core subjects of the national curriculum (English, maths and the sciences) in the normal way.

However, during the remaining 40 per cent of their lessons, the children form small, separate sets to study subjects such as music, drama, art, history, geography and French itself through the medium of the French Language.

To help them join in and pick up the language quickly, beginners work in sets of ten or fewer. Sets for intermediate and advanced pupils are also very small.

Adults learn a second language only with a struggle: even those with a gift for languages cannot shake off an accent. For the young, it is effortless.

Learning languages is all the more valuable in a world where communication is dissolving national boundaries. If a second language has been a luxury in this century, it will be vital in the next - for most people in most jobs. The average educated European already speaks a second language, and the British will be at a comprehensive disadvantage not to do so too, especially in the context of the European Union.

## Spring at Seaford

THE SPRING term at Seaford College will see the pupils not only throwing themselves into their academic studies but also into the activities offered by the college.

Several teams took part in the County 'Charlton Chase' night orienteering expedition on January 18. This is a demanding exercise that takes place across the South Downs. One of the college teams came second in the standard 14-mile chase, being beaten by only two points.

The little grey cells will be exercised to the full by pupils who enter the College inter-house chess competition this term. With pride and the Chess Cup at stake there will be a lot of gloating at the end by the winning house.

Each term the college has a 'multi-day', when the students can pay £1 to a nominated charity and are allowed to dress in casual clothes for the day. These days are very popular and usually raise about £250 for the nominated charity. This year it is in aid of multiple sclerosis sufferers.

In February the College played host to an exhibition of art and design work created by children from 24 local prep schools. The exhibition which ran for three weeks was opened by TV personality Tony Hart.

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adj. Being the only one of its kind, having no like or equal or parallel.

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Registrar: KirwinC@aol.com

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http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/kelly\_college

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maximum through qualified nursery staff and a well-expanding nursery school. From after the Easter break, full days are being offered as well.

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QUESTION 1 - Which schools within the education pages show their badges/crests on their advertisement?

QUESTION 2 - How many schools use the word 'dyslexia' in their advertisement?

QUESTION 3 - How many schools start with the letter 'S'?

Send to: Navy News, Britannica Competition Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

NAME: ..... ADDRESS: .....

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Simply cut out the coupon and send to the Navy News. Replies must be received by 30 April 1998. Entries with all 3 correct answers will be entered into a prize draw conducted at Navy News in May 1998. The winner will be announced in the July issue. (Entries cannot be returned). More than one original can be submitted but photocopies of coupons cannot be accepted. You should submit your entry on the original coupon. Should you require more copies please telephone (01705) 826040. THE CD IS BOTH MAC & P.C COMPATIBLE.

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# Lord Tryon,

**A** TRAGIC misjudgment or obstinacy – whatever the cause of the loss of HMS Victoria in June, 1893, the man held responsible would seem to have been aware of his burden beyond this life.

Admiral Sir George Tryon, commanding the Mediterranean Fleet in manoeuvres off Syria, had arranged his ships in two columns, which were then ordered to turn in towards each other, thus reversing the direction of travel.

The gap between the two columns was clearly too small for the manoeuvre to be attempted safely – but junior officers who

**Seamen have always been prey to ghosts, sea monsters and the inexplicable – and an attempt to pardon a wartime 'witch' gives MIKE GRAY a chance to peek into the unknown...**

raised doubts were overruled by the Admiral, who was later heard to mutter "It is all my fault" as the battleship HMS Camperdown rammed his flagship.

He is said to have compounded the tragedy by refusing help, believing the damage was minor – yet within minutes the ship had started to heel to starboard, and she went down carrying more than 350 officers and ratings with her.

Tryon went down with his ship – but at the moment of his death,

some 2,000 miles away at his home in Eaton Square, London, several guests at a dinner party hosted by his wife clearly saw the Admiral.

One version has him striding into the drawing room and out of a door at the other end, another has guests seeing him on the stairs.

Whichever version is preferred, the events caused a stir in those who had seen it – but the greater shock followed some days later when the first news of his death reached London.



● Tragic manoeuvre – Admiral Lord Tryon's flagship HMS Victoria sinks as the battleship HMS Nile stands by to rescue survivors.  
Picture: RN Museum.

## Dock drama

CASSANDRA Eason, in her book *Miracles* (Piatkus Books, 1997, £8.99), tells of a wartime DEMS gunner whose ship was in dry dock in Durban, South Africa.

Returning to his ship one dark night, he groped his way towards a bridge which spanned the unfenced 30ft deep dock.

Heading for a sentry's light, he was suddenly filled with fear and could not move – and with the next sweep of the sentry's torch the man found he was literally on the lip of the dock, yards from where he thought the bridge was.

Next day, a man's body was found in the dock – his guardian angel had not been with him.

# the witch



● Helen Duncan.

**H**ELEN Duncan was a Scottish mother-of-six who built a reputation as a medium before the war – but who was apparently seen as a threat by those planning the D-Day landings.

She had toured the country in the 1930s staging seances at which she claimed to communicate with the dead.

Her card was marked when she apparently revealed the fate of HMS Barham (see below) during a seance in Portsmouth in 1941, and in January 1944 she was arrested by a policeman attending another seance in Portsmouth.

She was eventually charged under the 18th century Witchcraft Act, and sentenced to nine months in Holloway.

She continued to practise after the war, despite a vow to the contrary when she was jailed, and died in late 1956.

The Witchcraft Act was repealed in 1951 as a direct consequence of her trial, which had been sharply criticised by Winston Churchill.

Now a number of groups are marshalling their arguments in order to win Mrs Duncan a free pardon – although a Home Office spokesman said no official application had been made to the Home Secretary for a review of the case.

## Naval spirits

A CHURCHYARD in Oxfordshire is rumoured to be haunted by the spirit of a Naval officer who was murdered on the instructions of his step-mother in the late 18th century.

Hampden Pye, of Faringdon, was said to have had his head blown off "accidentally" during a gunnery exchange with the enemy.

But the vengeful – and headless – ghost was seen soon after, sitting beside his treacherous step-mother, and he went on to haunt the commanding officer who took the bribe, and the gunner who murdered him.

Another spirit with a Naval connection is said to haunt Fort Blockhouse at Gosport, now part of HMS Dolphin.

Jack the Painter – James Aitken – started a fire in the Portsmouth Dockyard rope-house and was hanged. His body was hung in a gibbet to rot as a warning to others, and the clanking of the gibbet chains are said to be discernable on stormy winter nights.

# and the warships



**T**HE LOSS of the battleship HMS Barham so early in the war would have been a severe blow to morale in Britain.

The ship, a veteran of the Battle of Jutland, was torpedoed by U-331 in November 1941 in the central Mediterranean.

A seaman on one of the destroyers accompanying the fleet reported that the 31,000 ton ship took no longer than five minutes to disappear below the surface, taking more than 850 men with her.

A wireless silence was imposed immediately, so the first report was flown to Alexandria by aeroplane.

News of the disaster was withheld for weeks – but then word apparently got through by a route not considered by the Admiralty.

Many of the victims were from the Portsmouth division, and it was in Portsmouth in 1941 that Helen Duncan held one of her seances.

Mrs Duncan claimed she had made contact with the spirit of a dead sailor from HMS Barham; this was the first inkling that something had gone wrong.

The authorities were said to have monitored her closely for several months, and then taken action for fear that she would foresee the D-Day landing plans.

But it was not just wartime tragedy that brought the spirit world into contact with the world of the living.

Almost ten years after the loss of the Barham, HM submarine Affray went missing in April 1951 on her way to join exercises in the Channel.

In his book *Few Survived* (Leo Cooper/Secker and Warburg), author Edwyn Gray relates a story from Warren Armstrong's *Sea Phantoms* of how the boat disappeared with a total of 75 people.

An intensive search continued for weeks, but no trace was found of her – but one person knew where she was.

The wife of a rear admiral later reported seeing the figure of an engineering officer who had served with her husband, and who she knew quite well.

On the night the submarine disappeared, the officer appeared and told her the boat was at the north end of Hurd Deep, and that disaster had come quickly and unexpectedly.

Her husband was not interested in her ghost story until two months later salvage vessel HMS Reclaim located the wreck of the Affray far outside her intended course – she was found at the north end of the Hurd Deep...

● Battleship HMS Barham sinks fast after having been hit by torpedoes in the Mediterranean. News of the sinking was kept under wraps – but a spiritualist back in Portsmouth apparently caused the authorities problems by communicating with a dead crewman.

## Membership Application Form

Please enrol me as a member of The Gang Plank Club.  
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## Ship of ghouls

A NEWSPAPER in the 1880s reported that HMS Inconstant – carrying the future King George who was then a midshipman – encountered a ghost ship.

According to *Royal Sailors* by A. Cecil Hampshire (Wm Kimber and Co, 1971) Prince George transferred from HMS Bacchante when rudder repairs were carried out in Melbourne.

Before a scheduled trip to Fiji, the flagship Inconstant was en route for Port Jackson when, one night in the middle watch, "a brig-rigged ship enveloped in a mysterious red glow" was sighted by the masthead lookout.

It was widely believed by those on board to be the phantom Flying Dutchman, a ship of ill-omen. More than a dozen of the ship's company saw the apparition, among them the officer of the watch.

Next day the lookout man who had spotted the Dutchman fell to his death from the mast, and a little later the admiral fell seriously ill.

## Kraken good stories at sea

GHOST ships, sea monsters, mermaids, freak weather – all in a day's work for the sailors of centuries gone by.

But have you ever experienced something unusual while at sea – something that couldn't be explained?

If so, Navy News would like to hear from you.

Please write to the Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.

Any pictures or illustrations would be welcomed.



# The GANG PLANK Club

## CHAT PAD

THIS IS your Chat Pad, with news and views from all the members.

In answer to the question about musical instruments, the most played was the recorder and the most unusual so far was the saxophone. Do you know of a more unusual instrument? Write to the Chat Pad.

Don't forget some important dates in March. March 17 is St Patrick's Day, March 22 is Mother's Day (take a look at Captain Plank's present list) and British Summer Time begins on March 22, which is good news for all you hot shot bikers as there's more time to go cycling after school, but before you do, take a look at our top cycling tips.

And don't forget to enter the great competition to win a special edition of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*!

AHOY there, landlubbers! It has been a bit rough at sea lately so we've decided to come alongside for a few weeks.

I'm just beginning to get me land legs again. Young Jack has introduced me to this new-fangled TV box. I must say I like the jolly

stories, especially them kids at *Grange Hill* and those people who have a ship just like mine, I think it's called *Blue Peter*.

Do you have a favourite programme? Why not write and tell me and I'll get Jack to find it for me. Good watching me hearties!

## Plank's pressies for Mum

1. Take some plain biscuits and decorate them. Either use ready made icing kits or, with the help of a grown-up, mix icing sugar, water and food colouring to form a thick paste for decorating.

2. Make a home-made card. Mums like these a lot. It can be as simple as folding a piece of paper in half, colouring the outside and then remembering to sign your name inside. If you have lots of time, why not use things from the garden to draw around

or make stencils. Leaves, twigs and even odd-shaped stones (washed) make good patterns.

3. Buy a bright bunch of daffodils and make them really special by cutting out a long piece of paper, colouring it in and wrapping it around the stems of the flowers before you give them.

4. If your mum, or favourite grown-up, has a sweet tooth, buy

some chocolate. It doesn't have to be expensive. If you buy a little chocolate bar you can make it more special by wrapping it in a piece of paper which you have coloured.

5. If you have very little time and no money then you can always give what Captain Plank gives his mum, Mrs Wood, a huge hug and a big pirate kiss!

## Muster the meanings - in our naval slang quick quiz

OKAY all you landlubbers, cork heads, turk heads or just plain shipmates, it's time to test your knowledge of ancient naval dockyard slang.

There are no prizes for correct answers but I promise not to throw you in the oggin if you make a greengrocer's job of it!

Have a go and see if you can work out what the following dockyard slang stands for. The answers are under this month's birthday names.

1. Harry Taters 2. Muster 3. Tiddly 4. Poultice Walloper

## JOLLY JOKES

Thanks for all your jokes, keep 'em coming!

What's yellow and smells of bananas?  
Monkey sick!  
Why did the one-handed man cross the road? To get to the second hand shop!  
Thomas Martin, Kent

Some flies were playing football on a table with a lump of sugar.

One fly says: "We have to do better than this, we're playing in the cup this weekend!"  
From Kev

What's the difference between a dog and a flea? A dog can have fleas but a flea can't have dogs!  
Lee Wolstenholmes, Hereford

## YOU COULD WIN A COPY OF "CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY"

by Roald Dahl

All you have to do is read the following storyline and answer the 3 questions correctly.

When Willy Wonka the most amazing chocolate maker in the world decides to choose a successor no-one is prepared for the unusual way he sets out selecting one.

Whoever finds the golden tickets placed inside Wonka's chocolate bars will visit the famous factory and the lucky winner will be allowed to take one other person of their own choice with them. Our hero Charlie Bucket is one of the lucky winners and decides to take Grandpa Joe with him to visit the factory. The instructions they are given are: the day chosen for the visit is the first day of the month of February. On this day and no other they must go to the factory gates at ten o'clock sharp in the morning and don't be late.

Now answer the three questions correctly and you could be a lucky winner of one of the FIVE 'CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY' books that we have to send to the winners. There are also 10 runner up prizes of CHARLIE'S SECRET CHOCOLATE BOOK.

1. Who is the lucky person that Charlie decides will accompany him to the factory?
2. What day is the visit planned for?
3. At what time must they be at the factory gates?

Send your answers with your name and address on a postcard to 'The Gang Plank Club', Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH. The Competition closes on 12th April 1998. THE JUDGES DECISION IS FINAL.

## TECHNOCAT

WOW! What an amazing time I've been having on the internet this month.

All I did was search under Pets UK and I opened up a whole web of cool info on animals and pets. I especially liked the site all about how to choose a pet and look after it. If you would like to look at that site go to <http://www.chantec5.co.uk/animalsuk/> there's loads of other info on wildlife, too. Don't forget to ask permission from the person who pays the phone bill!

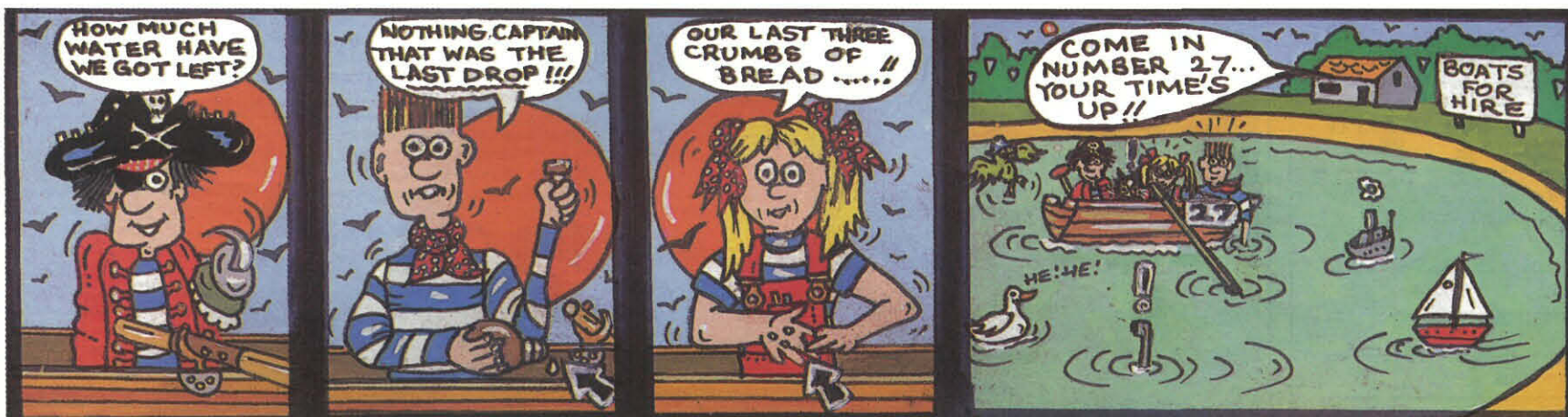


## March birthdays

Scott Clewes, Benjamin Youngs, Imogen Napper, Joseph Campbell, Francis Bell, Daniel Scully, M Cheesman, Mark Bull, Thomas Martin, Robert Plater, Adam Langley, Emma Whiteley, Kelly Barber, Keith Stevens, Andrew Grigg and Zoe Armstrong

SLANG QUIZ ANSWERS 1. Harry Taters - a Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Trust (Dockyard Language) by Bill Patterson of the first aid man (from 'A Dictionary of smart or nice' - a poultice Walloper - a Muster - to clock in or out of the dockyard. 2. Tiddly - something that looks like which has not been done properly 2. Harry Taters - a

## The GANG



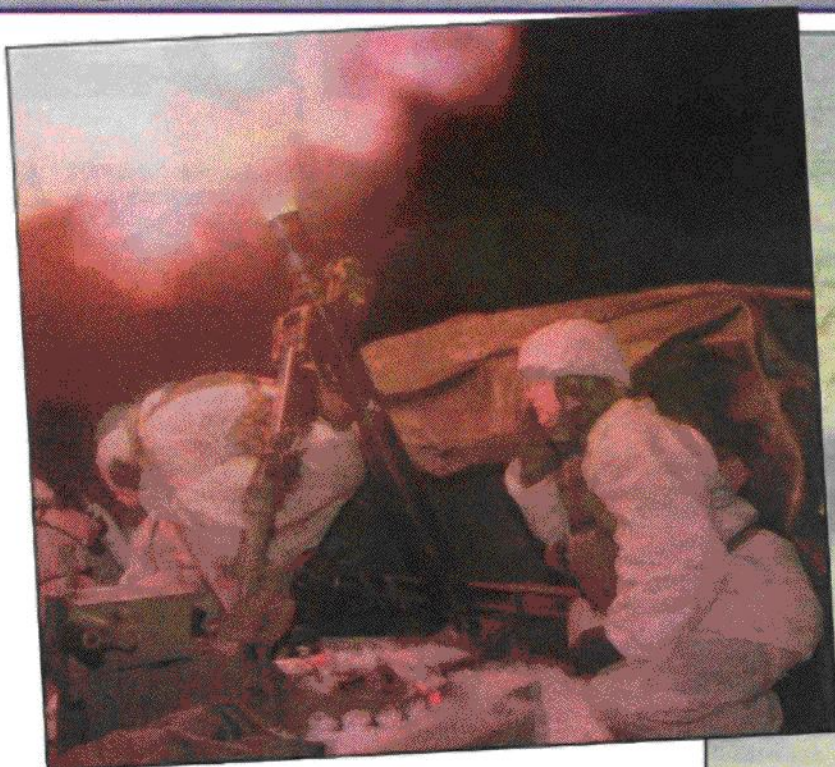
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# Royal Marines test their stamina in the snow of Arctic Norway ...



● **Fire and ice** – Royal Marines from 42 Cdo construct a snow cave to sleep in during survival training in the mountains of Northern Norway.  
● (Above left) Royals fire an 81mm mortar during the long Arctic night, with temperatures down to minus 28C.



● **Cool heads** – weapons training in the Arctic Circle.



## North

### Novices learn quickly

THE BITTER cold of Northern Norway gave experienced Royal Marines the chance to brush up their skills – and first-timers the chance to learn how to survive.

With wind-chill temperatures falling to -50C, novices moved from beginners to proficient skiers in two weeks.

The culmination was the ice-breaking drills, where every man had to jump into a hole in the ice to prove that he could haul himself and his equipment out of the freezing water unaided.

They also learnt how to fight effectively in this most inhospitable of climates.

More experienced 'Arctic foxes' undertook continuation courses.

One of the skills practised was dig-

ging snow caves, inside which they slept overnight without sleeping bags in temperatures down to -30C.

The Royals' effectiveness was demonstrated in Sweden when Cpl Pete Royston, Mne Malcolm Bond and Mne Steve Lord saved the life of a Norwegian youth buried in an avalanche.

Among those taking part in Exercise Green Wader and Cold Winter were 539 Assault Squadron RM, 42 Cdo, 45 Cdo, 3 Cdo Brigade HQ and Signals Squadron RM, elements of Commando Logistic Regiment RM and Dutch marines, allowing troops, coxswains and drivers to test their skills in a series of manoeuvres from amphibious landings to road deployments.

■ Frozen north to sunny south – see back.

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● **On the beach** – Royal Marines move ashore through semi-frozen waters. Face masks and dry suits are necessary to protect the men from the -50C temperatures generated by travelling at speed in their rigid raiders.

Pictures by LA(Phot) Steve Lewis (42 Cdo)





...while Endurance sails deeper into Antarctica than ever before

● **Passing interest** – a fur seal keeps watch on HMS Endurance as the ship remains at anchor in Stromness Bay in South Georgia. Inset: Endurance passes the one billion tonne iceberg which broke away from Antarctica 12 years ago.



# and South

● **Business as usual** – emperor penguins at the Hilton Inlet on the Black Coast of Antarctica ignore visitors taking a walk ashore from HMS Endurance during the ship's deployment to the Weddell Sea.

Pictures: LA/Photo Mark Southwood

EXCEPTIONAL conditions in the Antarctic have allowed the Navy into areas which are rarely free of ice.

The Weddell Sea was discovered in February 1823 by British explorer James Weddell, who sailed in the *Jane*, a 160-ton brig with a complement of 22.

Accompanying her was the 65-ton cutter *Beaufoy*, crewed by just 13.

Under normal conditions, it is doubtful if supplies would have seen them through the expedition, but that southern summer was so clear they were able to sail further south than anyone had managed before.

Freak weather conditions meant the waters, usually clogged with dangerous ice, could only offer a couple of tame icebergs.

Similar conditions, prompted by unusual wind conditions rather than climatic change, coincided with the visit of HMS *Endurance* to the Weddell Sea last month to help members of the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), who have reaped the benefit with valuable and extensive scientific research.

Ships rarely visit the Weddell Sea, so records are scarce, but it is believed that *Endurance* is the first ship to have penetrated the heavy ice as far up the eastern side of the Antarctic peninsula.

Another pioneering activity was the landing of the entire ship's company on the ice shelf at the New Bedford Inlet on the Lassiter Coast – scientists have visited the area by plane and sledge, but the conditions allowed *Endurance* to

come alongside the ice shelf and use the accommodation ladder.

The ship will now be looking to improve on her own 1994 record, when she got within 753 miles of the South Pole.

On her travels, *Endurance* passed close by one of the three massive icebergs which broke away from the Ronne-Filchner ice shelf in 1986.

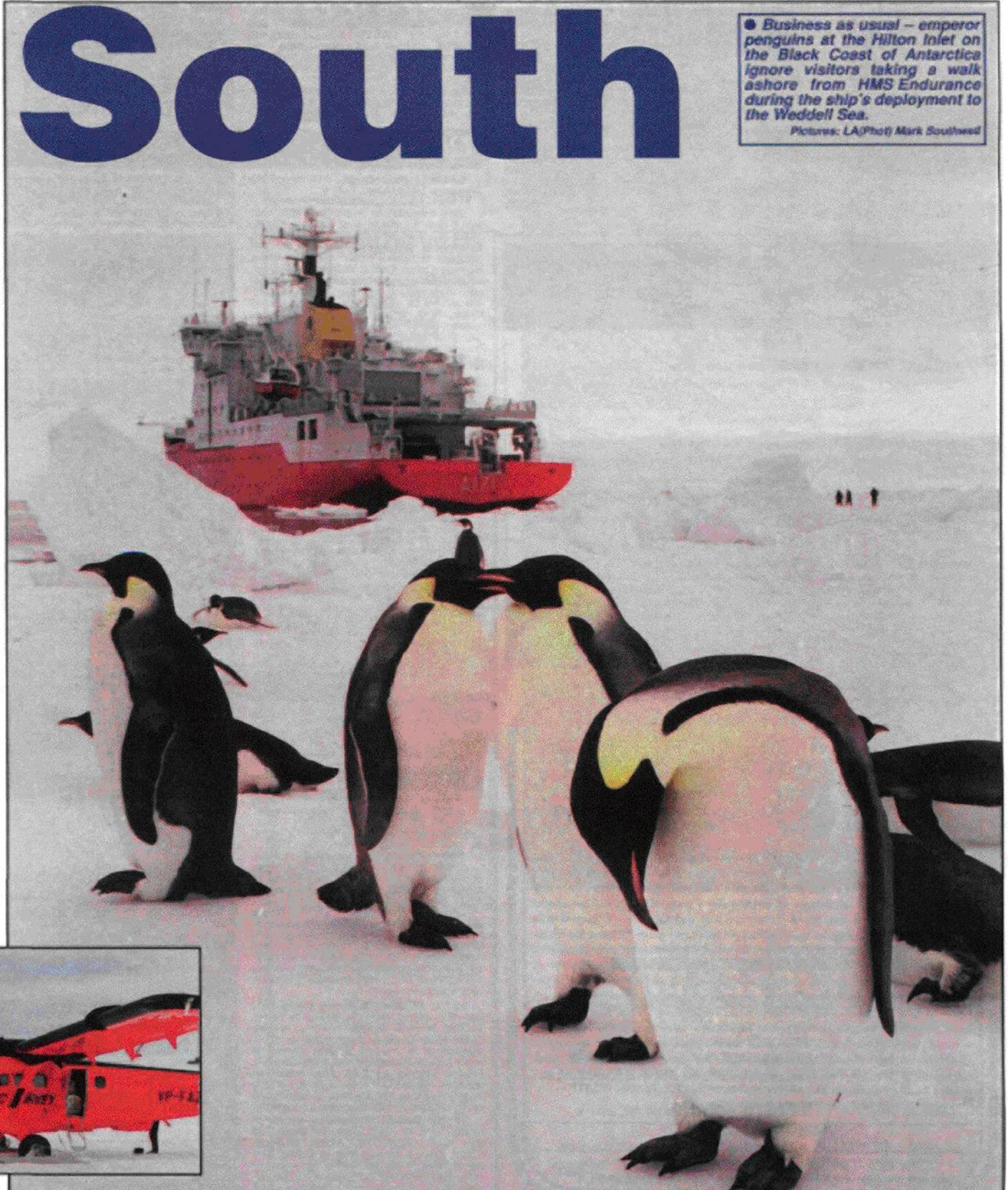
The berg measures 20 miles by 40 miles, is 500 metres deep, weighs more than a billion metric tonnes, and is now moving steadily north in open water.

Someone with a mathematical mind has worked out that the berg could supply enough ice for three gin and tonics per day for every person in the UK over the next 100,000 years, or meet UK domestic water needs for 400 years.

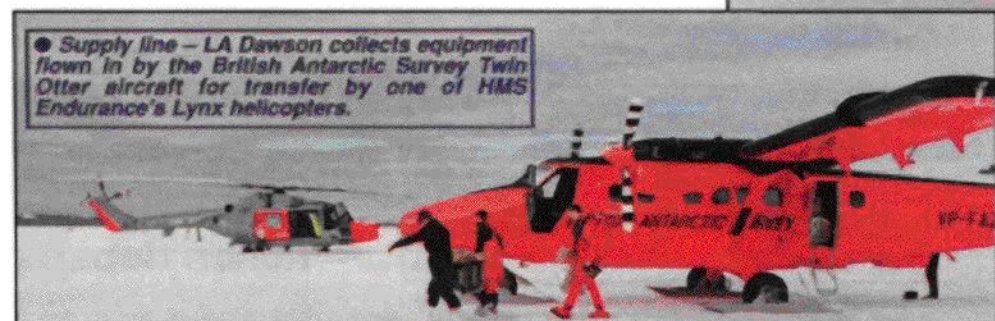
Recent media speculation about ice shelf collapse and icebergs twice the size of Norfolk have given this year's *Endurance* deployment a high degree of topicality.

Although the media's favourite ice-shelf, the Larsen, is a good indicator of local conditions, the BAS team is concentrating on the Ronne-Filchner shelf, which is the most massive in Antarctica, and has a major effect on global climate through its profound influence over ocean currents, including the Gulf Stream.

Scientists on the ship are investigating temperature changes in ice shelf water, and sensors are being placed to allow monitoring to continue when the ship returns home.



● **Supply line** – LA Dawson collects equipment flown in by the British Antarctic Survey Twin Otter aircraft for transfer by one of HMS *Endurance*'s Lynx helicopters.





## 40 years ago

## Admiral Sir Michael Boyce

To **ACPOMT** - D.E.W. Innes (RH Haslar).

POCY - 565 (13.10.92), 1; PORS - 625

POWTR(SM) - 299 (2.7.94), Nil; LWTR(SM) - 384 (30.11.93), Nil; POCA(SM) - Int (9.1.97), Nil; LCH(SM) - 927 (29.7.90), Nil; POSTD(SM) - 765 (2.12.90), Nil; LSTD(SM)

**LAEM(L), Paul Dodd, 848 Naval Air Squadron, HMS Heron, Feb. 1.**

LAEM(L), Paul Dodd, 848 Naval Air Squadron, HMS Heron. Feb. 1.

**Vice Admiral Sir John Gray** KBE, CB,

**Lt Cdr Donald McCormick**, served in

**Horace Fox**, member of HMS Cornwall (1939-42) Association, Jan. 13.  
**Jim Walford**, Ships: Illustrious, Bulwark

mittee member Ayr & Prestwick. Served 1938-47. Ships: Wildfire, Barham Shropshire, Nimrod, Dinosaur, Cormorant Lookout. Jan. 21, aged 76.

HMS Itchen is due to decommission on April 8 at Faslane. She entered service in 1985.



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# New Mazda 626 sets the pace

**Y**EARS ago I owned a couple of Mazda cars, and I was impressed then by the high specification – features like velour upholstery, tinted glass and laminated windscreen.

We take that kind of thing for granted now, but for motors made in the 1970s that was class, and the specification has only got higher.

Today's new Mazda 626 models boast class-leading levels of safety and equipment, style, and aggressive pricing.

With a choice of four-door saloon or five-door hatchback priced from just £13,960 on the road, and an estate on its way, standard specification includes full intelligent air conditioning, power steering and electric windows all round.

They all have driver's airbag, side impact door beams, seat-belt pre-tensioners, three-point seatbelts for all five seats and high-level brake light as standard.

On the GXi, GSi and SE versions there is also a passenger airbag and anti-lock brakes, while the SE boasts side

airbags and traction control as well. All but the entry-level 1.8i have electric glass sunroofs and heated door mirrors.

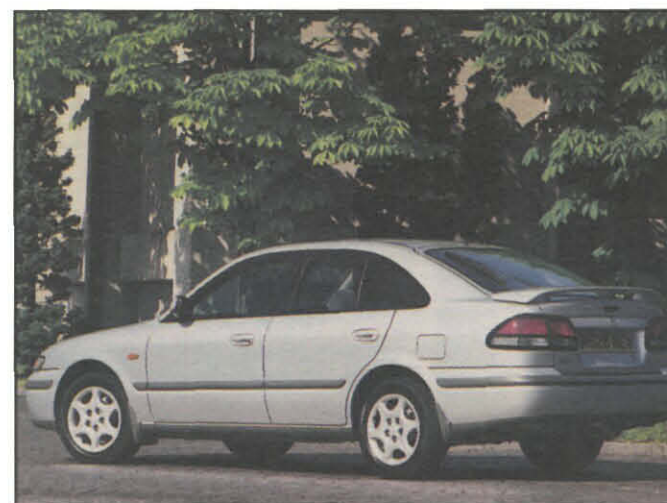
Special attention has been paid to security, with an alarm, immobiliser, remote central locking with deadlocks, and window etching combined to make the range more affordable with the insurance groupings significantly lower – the new entry level 1.8-litre model which was Group 14 is now classed just 8E.

The latest five-door model 626 was launched first with a choice of three engines, a 90bhp 1.8, a 115bhp 2-litre and 136bhp 2-litre.

This range was joined in August by a pair of elegant four-door versions, both powered by the 115bhp 2-litre engine with two trim levels priced the same as the equivalent five-door.

The model tested was the five-door 2-litre GXi, priced at £15,610 and classed Group 10E for insurance.

It is a big and roomy car in the Montego class, and a lively mover, capable of 0-60mph in under 10 seconds and on to 124mph – so the makers say. And yet, despite the size and performance I comfortably averaged 35mpg on fast main



● Mazda's new 626 five-door model

roads and winding lanes where you appreciate the taut handling, smooth ride and reassurance of the anti-lock braking.

A comfortable and well-insulated cabin is complemented by the luggage capacity. The rear hatch rises high for good access to a healthy load bay which took the electric wheelchair with ease – no need to fold forward one of the back seats as can be the case on smaller cars.

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## County double

THE NAVY returned to the South West Counties Cup match programme with a tricky away visit to Wiltshire, top of the group and unbeaten writes *Lt Cdr Jim Danks*.

They kept their hopes alive of winning the game with a competent all-round performance on a heavy pitch and they earned a 3-1 victory. In an exciting opening period, Cpl Terry Price brought down Geoff Lewis on the edge of the area and was relieved to receive only a caution, and from the resultant free kick Lewis shot over the bar.

In the 5th minute, a fine solo run by PO Nigel Thwaites took him to the edge of the Wiltshire penalty area and from 20 yards he found the corner of the net with a strong shot past a despairing dive by Perrin in goal for Wiltshire and the Navy took the lead 1-0.

As Wiltshire sought an equaliser, John Messenger hit a post and Lewis lobbed one over the head of keeper MEM Jason White but was over the bar, too.

After weathering the storm, the Navy increased their lead when, following a corner on the right by POPT Fraser Quirke, LA John de la Haye headed goalwards and CPO Will Flint forced the ball home to make the score 2-0 at half time.

After the break Wiltshire exerted non-stop pressure on the Navy defence and after White had produced a fine save from York, Lewis ran through to wrong foot him and scored in the 56th minute to make it 2-1.

The Navy withstood the onslaught and restored their two-goal margin when Thwaites's run on the left and pass into the penalty area found LPT Steve O'Neil who made the final score 3-1.

### Somerset

The Navy kept their group title bid on track with a 3-0 defeat of Somerset at Portsmouth, with two goals from Flint in the first ten minutes and a hat-trick by half time.

After the break Navy were slow to find their rhythm but after a disappointing display finished 3-0 ahead, putting the Navy at the top of the group with six points.

**FIXTURES:** 3rd: RN v Gloucester Yeovil. 11th Army v RN, Aldershot, 18th: RN v RAF, Portsmouth. 24th: RN v Dorset, Bridport. All kick off 1930.

In the Navy Cup semi finals on March 4th Sultan are home to Dryad and CTCRM are home to Seahawk. The final will be at Burnaby Road, Portsmouth, at 1930 on Wednesday March 25.

The RN will play the RAF in the final match of the interservices at Portsmouth at 1930 on Wednesday March 18. Your support will be very welcome!

## Seahawk lands soccer trophy

HMS SEAHAWK were the victors of the RN Women's Inter Unit Indoor Football Tournament held at HMS Nelson.

Sixteen units and establishments were represented with teams travelling from as far afield as HMS Neptune and HMS Ocean, which is currently in build at Barrow.

HMS Westminster won the Fleet Prize but the final was won by HMS Seahawk after a penalty goal against HMS Heron.

Interest in women's indoor football in the RN is steadily growing and the Navy team is

due to take on the Army Women's Football Team at Aldershot on March 11. For details of this fixture and future games, and information on coaching course, contact the RN Women's Sports Office at HMS Temeraire.



# Royals keep a firm hold on Alpine title

THE ROYAL Marines have won all three command races at the RN Alpine Ski Championships for the second year running.

Despite a fierce challenge from Naval Air Command, victories in the Slalom, GS and Super G saw the Royals retain the command championships title in the 1998 event at Valloire, France.

In the team races, Cdo Logistics RM were the top major team while 819 NAS won the minor A and B team awards. HMS London won the Fleet Trophy and the RNWSA Club Team title was won by the Strawbs.

Cpl Ross Barbour RM was the expert men overall champion

### 1998 ALPINE SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS

while POWPT Carole Strong retained the expert women's overall champion title.

Combined event (non expert) awards went to Capt Johnny Rowland and Lt Antonia Simpson. Lt Cdr Larry Young was top Super Veteran, while ex-RN team captain Keith Mills and Marie Dempsey were the winners in the Veteran category.

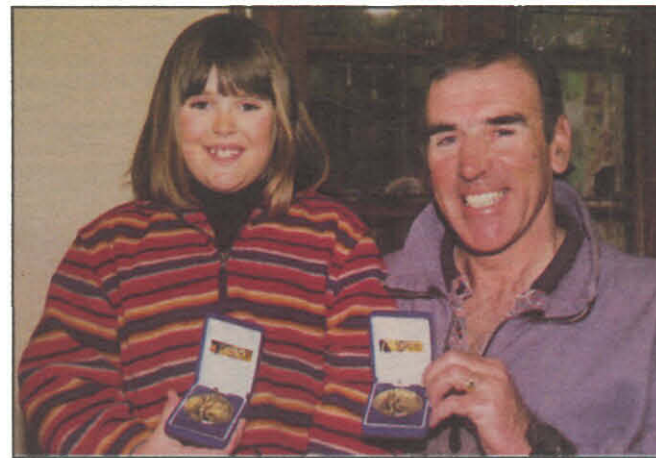
More than 500 RN personnel travelled to France for the championships, which have become the largest event in the RN sporting calendar. Despite mixed weather, all races were completed and no major injuries were reported.



● **FLEETING FAME:** Fleet Trophy winners HMS London (left to right) CCWEA Keith Wetherell, Lt Cdr Gari Jenkins and US exchange officer Lt Doug Dalena.



● **TAKE OFF:** Lt Nick Chick of 819 NAS. The squadron's A and B teams won the Minor Team Giant Slalom and Special Slalom and were overall champions in their category. Picture: Steve Prior, HMS Warrior.



● **GENERATION GAP:** Lt Cdr Larry Young and his granddaughter Charlotte (8) both won medals for individual GS, Lt Cdr Young was top Super Veteran and Charlotte won the Junior Medal.

## In brief

### Clay pigeon club to meet

THE ROYAL Navy Clay Pigeon Shooting Association is to hold its annual general meeting at HMS Raleigh on March 14.

The meeting will be held at Treval Range at 1400 after the final selection shoot for the RN team, and details of the interservices and many other shooting matters will be discussed.

The association is open to both novices and professionals. For further details, or for items to be placed on the agenda, please contact PO Mitchell on 01935 456255.

### Hardest race in Britain?

ORGANISERS of the Low Alpine Western Isles Challenge are looking for service teams to take part in a race billed as 'the toughest in Britain.'

The race is a 250-mile four-man relay from the Isle of Barra in the Outer Hebrides to the Butt of Lewis, involving hill running, sea canoeing and mountain biking.

Full details are available on the internet at [www.wichallenge.prestel.co.uk](http://www.wichallenge.prestel.co.uk) or from the Race Director Ian Callaghan on 01859 550238.

### Jumpers set new record

NAVY skydivers set a new freefall record when seven members of the Senior Service linked up over Salisbury Plain last month.

CPO Mick Tyler, PO Steve Lambert, PO Andy Wagstaff, PO Robbie Way, Lt Si Garr, LMEM Caroline McQueen and PO Phil Elston made the jump from 12,000ft over JSPC Netheravon.

### Ark takes on soccer stars

SOCCER players from HMS Ark Royal will be taking on a team of past and present professionals in a charity match in the ship's affiliated town of Leeds.

The team will play alongside junior members of Leeds Chamber of Commerce in the game at Leeds South Stadium which will raise cash for Childline.

The match kicks off at 1400 on Sunday, March 8 and the team is looking for as many supporters as possible. For further details, contact Lt Midmore on 01705 723362.

### URNUs battle it out for Drake Shield

UNIVERSITY Royal Navy Units from all over the UK were battling it out for the prestigious Drake Shield as Navy News went to press.

Over 400 URNU personnel were taking part in the competition which involved hockey and rugby matches at HMS Sultan, HMS Dryad and HMS Excellent.

The competition was being hosted by Southampton URNU, with accommodation being provided on board the training ship HMS Bristol at Whale Island.

## Dragon Boat team takes on the World!

THE ROYAL Marines Dragon Boat racing team was representing Great Britain at the World Championships in New Zealand as Navy News went to press.

The Royals have been involved in Dragon Boat racing since 1993 and have been the fastest team in Britain for the last two years.

Dragon Boat racing began in Asia thousands of years ago but its intensely competitive and physically demanding nature made it an instant hit with the Corps.

### Thrilling

WO Jed Stone said: "The thrill, ceremony and physical challenge of this new sport has caught our imagination."

"What started as a sponsored event in Exeter has led to the team representing Great Britain in Hong Kong and China, and in South Africa the team were awarded the Hong Kong Floating Trophy for being the best international team, beating teams from the rest of the world."





# Broncos dazzle Service select

A CROWD of over 800 Rugby League supporters turned to see a Service Select XIII take on the might of the London Broncos at the Burnaby Road, Portsmouth.

Both teams put in an excellent performance and the final score of 70-2 to the Broncos does not reflect the passion with which the Services played.

The unstoppable Broncos scored a total 17 tries, including two from their star player Martin Offiah who praised the Services

## RUGBY LEAGUE

after the game for their brave effort.

The match was ideal preparation for the Broncos who had not played together since a number of new team members arrived earlier in the year.

### Spirit

The Services showed immense spirit throughout the game, but fell short when it came to ball

handling, speed of pass and keeping the ball alive during the tackle.

Their only two points came late in the second quarter when full-back Simon Hicks banged home a penalty.

The post match events saw Man of the Match awards go to the Bronco Rob Beazley and the Army's Wayne Braddock and the Services team representative POPT Wayne O'Kell was presented with a signed Broncos shirt.

The game was part of weekend visit by the Broncos which included a coaching session for youngsters aged 6 to 18 at HMS Collingwood, and a tour of HMS Victory.



● POWEM(R) Perry Mason poised to collect the ball under the watchful eyes of two Broncos players



● Junior winner MEM Karl Jackson (18) receives his award from Commodore John Hance, CO of HMS Dryad.

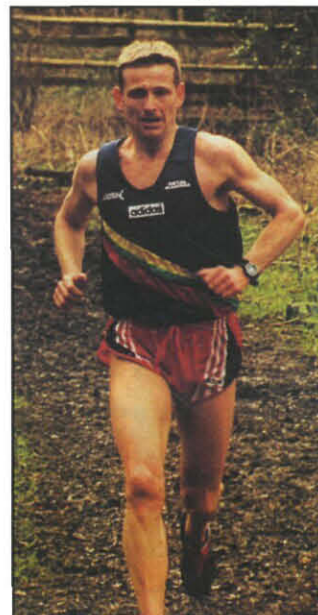
## Dryad stages RN cross country championships

THE JUNIOR men's race produced the best results for the Navy at the 1998 Royal Navy and Royal Marines cross country championships at HMS Dryad.

Eighteen-year-old MEM Karl Jackson (Fleet) ran away with the 3.2-mile race and was more than minute ahead of his nearest rivals, Rct Wilson (RM) and WEA Hotchin (Portsmouth). Portsmouth juniors scooped the team title.

The result was a particularly pleasing one for Jackson who was allowed to fly home for the race from West Indies Guardship HMS Newcastle after his considerable talent was recognised.

The Royal Marines won the men's team and men's veteran events and the ladies team event was won by Plymouth. The individual winners were Cpl Gary Gerrard (Men's) with LCH Roper second, Capt Rye (Veterans) with WO2 Payne second, and LW Webb (Ladies) with POWren Gannon second.



● Above: Cpl Gary Gerrard RM, who finished in 29 minutes 47 seconds, on his way to victory in the men's senior race. Left: the competitors under starters orders at Dryad.

## Ref steps into the limelight

NAVY referee POMEM David Finch was thrust into the limelight at Fratton Park when one of the assistant referees was knocked out by a spectator.

PO Finch was acting as fourth official during the Division One clash between Portsmouth and Sheffield United on January 31 which resulted in a 1-1 draw.

## Surfers' hopes ride on official recognition

THE ROYAL NAVY and Royal Marines board-riders association is planning to stage a number of competitions during the year and a surf safari in September or October.

A Spring contest is planned at Gwithian on April 4 and 5, a 'Summer Cooler' will be held on July 4 and 5 at Sennen Cove, the RN/RM Championships are on

Sept 26 and 27, the interservices on October 17/18 and a 'Christmas Cold One' at Sennen on December 5 and 6. The BSA interclubs contest will be held on June 6/7 and June 13/14 at a venue to be confirmed.

The association has proved that surfing can exist as a self-funding sport and is keen to gain recognition from the RN/RM Sports Council who could help with

the funding and equipment which are needed to encourage more RN personnel to take part.

If you would like to learn how to ride the waves, cruise the tubes and shred the sections, qualified instructors are available at RNAS Culdrose. For details, contact POPT Mike Murphy, PT Office, RNAS Culdrose, Helston Tel 01326 552265 or Culdrose 2265.



## Squash team fails to rebound

SICKNESS and non-availability contributed to a poor result for the Navy in this year's inter-services squash championships.

The competition, hosted by the RAF at HMS Temeraire, saw LWTR Youdale, CPOPT Ian Binks, Lt Cdr Lockwood, WO2 Pearson, Cpl Young, Lt Cdr Shaw and Cdr Farrage representing the Navy in the senior event.

But the opposition was too strong and the Army finished first, with the RAF second and the Navy in third.

The women, represented by Lt Cdr Crumplin, CPO Walker, WO Chalmers, PO Murray, LWPT Keegan and POWPT Bone, were unable to retain the trophy they won last year, but gave a good account of themselves before finishing third behind the RAF in first place and the Army in second.

In the U25s, the Navy had a good chance of retaining their 1997 title, when LAEA Draper, LAEA Armstrong, AB Flint, LOM Gapp, CK Ward and MEM Webb defeated the RAF 4-1. But in a hard battle with the Army they lost 5-0 and had to settle for second place, with the Army first and the RAF in third.

The veterans provided the Navy's highlight with a 4-1 defeat of the Army setting the scene for a final with the RAF. Lt Young, WO Dunphy, Lt McKeown, CPOPT Stewart, Capt Pelly, Lt Gilliard and Cdr Wilkinson all played 4 or 5 sets and the Navy were the eventual winners, running out 3-2 ahead of the RAF.

ROYAL NAVY		RUGBY UNION
<b>ROYAL NAVY</b> VERSUS <b>ARMY</b> at Twickenham Saturday 25th April 1998 KO 3pm Meet new and old acquaintances in the West Car Park <b>NOT JUST A RUGBY MATCH BUT A SOCIAL OCCASION</b> Tickets £10 (Children £5) also special rates for Schools and Sea Cadet Units from RNRU Ticket Secretary 01705 724193 FAX 01705 725472 HMS TEMERAIRE, Burnaby Road, Portsmouth PO1 2HB Sponsored By Willis Corroon. <b>CREDIT CARD HOTLINE 01705 865575</b>		



# The bombs that are buried at sea . . .

WHILE the Army caught the headlines last month exploding German bombs found buried in a field near Chippenham, a Navy ordnance disposal team was called to a fishing vessel off Plymouth.

The Rachel Helen had trawled up a large object which once brought on deck looked decidedly dodgy . . .

The skipper (who had previously had his nets destroyed by "a large underwater explosion") wasted no time in alerting Brixham Coastguard who co-ordinated the disposal operation.

On arrival, the Plymouth-based clearance divers identified a mine charge case containing 500lb of high explosive from a World War II buoyant mine. This was taken to a safe area

and carefully lowered to the seabed – where a controlled explosion dramatically confirmed that the device was still live.

Last year the Plymouth bomb disposal team carried out over 320 tasks in their area which stretches over 1,600 miles of coastline from Swanage, Dorset to the River Dee near Liverpool and includes the Isles of Scilly and Guernsey.



# Resolve in strength in biggest ever NATO exercise

AS NAVY NEWS went to press more than 20 Royal Navy warships and RFAs were preparing to take part in the biggest NATO exercise ever staged.

Exercise Strong Resolve, from March 9–21, involves over 150 ships from 25 nations and includes manoeuvres in Norway, France, Spain and Portugal.

Over 55,000 Service personnel from 15 NATO countries and ten Partnership for Peace nations are taking part in the first large-scale test of NATO's ability to respond to crises occurring in separate geographical areas at the same time.

The Royal Navy warships expected to take part are Type 23 frigates HMS Argyll, Iron Duke, Richmond, Somerset and Sutherland plus Type 22 frigates HMS Chatham, Cornwall, Cumberland and London and the minesweepers HMS Chiddingfold, Ledbury, Hurworth and Walney.

They will be joined by an amphibious Task Group led by HMS Fearless which is sailing from Northern Norway with the British and Dutch Marines who have been engaged in Exercise Green Wader.

## Marine mystery still unsolved

A NEW hi-tech quest by forensic researchers has drawn a blank in finding the body of a Royal Marine who disappeared in the Falkland Islands 18 years ago.

Falkland Islands police believe 19-year-old Mne Alan Addis was murdered and buried in the North Arm area after a social club party in 1980.

Hope of finding his body was raised when a three-man search team, equipped with special radar and a sniffer dog, were called in. But their three-week search which covered 54 suspected sites proved fruitless.

One of the team, Sgt Mick Swindells of Lancashire police, said the dog had been left with the Falklands police whose investigation was continuing.

Fearless will be joined by the French landing ship dock FS Foudre, the aviation training ship RFA Argus, landing ships Sir Galahad, Sir Geraint, Sir Percivale and Sir Tristram and the tanker RFA Olwen and will conduct landings in Brittany and Cadiz in Southern Spain.

With HMS Illustrious and HMS Invincible's attention focussed on the Gulf, RFA Argus will play a key role by taking on the duties of a helicopter assault ship, and the tanker RFA Orangeleaf will be supporting the Anglo-French frigate group.

For a full report and pictures, watch out for next month's Navy News.



## Penzance has more power to her elbow

HMS PENZANCE, first of seven Batch 2 Sandown Class minehunters – widely recognised as the most advanced in the world – ordered from Vosper Thornycroft in 1994 arrives at Portsmouth, where she will be commissioned in May.

Design changes include accommodation for female officers and ratings, bigger Voith Schneider propulsion units, enhanced air conditioning, a more powerful crane and a bigger, improved compression chamber for divers.

# 'BLACK DUKE' IS DELAYED OFF DARKEST AFRICA

HMS MONMOUTH, like HMS Invincible, found her return from deployment delayed last month – when she was diverted to the coast of war-torn Sierra Leone.

Due back in Devonport on February 23, her presence was

required "as a precautionary measure, to assist in any humanitarian operation if needs be."

Meanwhile the Type 22 frigate HMS Cornwall had sailed, in company with RFA Oakleaf, to visit a variety of African ports and team up for exercises with the South African Navy.

HMS Monmouth has been away for six months as the first RN ship to conduct a major deployment on the West African coast for many years. She has steamed over 27,000 miles and visited 14 different countries and British dependencies.

There have been exercises with a number of West African navies, British defence sales promotions – and two casualty evacuations, one of which, as reported in January, involved a 1,500 mile 'mercy dash' to Tristan da Cunha.

Said commanding officer Cdr Malcolm Sillars: "The deployment has provided unrivalled opportunities to gain experience of operating in this region, to exercise with its navies and to develop plans for humanitarian tasks in a volatile part of the developing world."

HMS Monmouth has also been the first Type 23 frigate to embark a Royal Marine Protection Party – here shown hitting the beach in exercises at False Bay, South Africa.



# An end to extra warrants

EXTRA TRAVEL warrants to help divorced or separated Service personnel to visit their children have fallen foul of equal opportunities law.

The Ministry of Defence's legal advisers have ruled that the regulation which halts the entitlement on remarriage is in breach of the Sex Discrimination Act Section 74, which relates to marital discrimination.

MOD "reluctantly" sees the the only viable course as withdrawal of the extra warrants altogether.

Air Marshal Sir Peter Squire, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Programmes and Personnel), said in a signal: "It is fully appreciated that this is a sensitive issue, and that withdrawal of the warrants will be a matter of considerable concern to current claimants."

"However, as a responsible employer, MOD has a duty of care to ensure that Service personnel policies are fully compliant, where appropriate, with all relevant equal opportunities legislation."

He gave an assurance that withdrawal of the entitlement had no connection with the changes to the UK leave travel scheme due on April 1 as a result of independent review.

# 'Long-term stability' aim of new review

WHILE the Strategic Defence Review may change the shape of the Services, it would not change the "overall position", said Armed Forces Minister Dr John Reid, during a visit to Devonport.

Dr Reid said the Royal Navy had a very important part to play, and the review, which is nearing completion, would give long-term stability to the Forces and leave them well equipped.

Dr Reid later confirmed that savings of more than £29m will be found following new arrangements for RN training, support and administration. Following negotiation between the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency and Flagship Training Ltd, agreement has been reached over the transfer to Flagship of the first phase of support services activities.

Over 434 Civil Service posts and 550 uniformed posts presently deliver general, administration and training support work. The transfer of posts will mean a creation of almost 300 new civilian jobs and release of uniformed personnel back to other areas of the RN.

